

No 151.

FAME
AND

5 CENTS.

FORTUNE WEEKLY

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY.

AFTER THE BIG BLUE STONE;
OR, THE TREASURE OF THE JUNGLE. *By A SELF-MADE MAN.*



As he sprang eagerly forward a puff of greenish smoke suddenly issued from under the gem and enveloped his face. Its overpowering odor staggered the boy. He threw up his arms wildly and fell back into the arms of his companion.

Fame and Fortune Weekly

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY

Issued Weekly—By Subscription \$2.50 per year. Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1908, in the office of the Librarian of Congress, Washington, D. C., by Frank Tousey, Publisher, 24 Union Square, New York.

No. 151.

NEW YORK, AUGUST 21, 1908.

PRICE 5 CENTS.

AFTER THE BIG BLUE STONE

OR,

THE TREASURE OF THE JUNGLE

By A SELF-MADE MAN

CHAPTER I.

WHICH TREATS OF THE BIG BLUE STONE.

"Then ye never heard about that there big blue stone in the stummick of the bronze idol in the temple of Jumna?" ejaculated William Flint, a thick-set seaman, his mahogany-hued countenance beaming upon two good-looking, stalwart American boys who sat facing him on the forecastle of the schooner "Gleam."

The vessel rode at anchor at the northern extremity of the Strait of Manaar, on the famous pearl fishing grounds of Ceylon.

On her port bow lay the coast of Madras, India—a thread of low, white sandhills, dotted with the dark-brown thatch of fishermen's huts and the vivid green of cocoanut palms.

The hour was three in the afternoon of a cloudless July day; the fitful land breeze had died away, leaving the whole surface of the sea like a sheet of undulating silver.

An eighth of a mile distant on the schooner's starboard quarter a score or more of native diving-boats rose and dipped to the regular motion of the long ground-swell.

The boys, whose names were Clif Halliday and Ben Wade, had come down from the town of Madras, which lies on the southeastern coast of the Indian peninsula, to see how the pearl fishery was conducted.

Clif's father was the American consul at Madras.

He had held the post for some years, and Clif, having been left at a Long Island military academy to prepare for college, had not seen him nor his mother for many moons, as he termed it.

His graduation from the academy offered Clif the opportunity to pay his father and mother a flying visit, and he had taken immediate advantage of the fact.

Ben Wade's father, mother, and sister having arranged to spend the summer in Europe, Ben found no difficulty in getting permission to accompany his chum, Clif, to India for his vacation instead of going with the family on their continental tour.

Clif and Ben went as far as England with the Wades.

After spending a week in London seeing the sights, Mr., Mrs., and Miss Wade accompanied the two boys to Southampton and saw them off in one of the Occidental Steamship Company's steamers for the Far East.

The steamer carried them across the Mediterranean Sea, through the Isthmus of Suez to the Red Sea, down that long narrow body of water to the Gulf of Aden, which they reached through the Strait of Bab-el Mandez, and thence across the edge of the Arabian Sea to the city of Bombay on the western coast of India.

From there they took passage on a steamer bound for Calcutta, but which stopped a few hours at Madras.

Clif was tickled to death to meet his mother and father again after a separation of nearly three years, and, as a matter of course, they were just as pleased to see him.

The boys put in a whole week in Madras and its environs, and were fascinated with the manners, customs and habits of the strange people they met there.

Then the opportunity presenting itself for them to visit the pearl fisheries, of which they had read and heard so much, Clif persuaded his father to allow them to go down to the grounds under the protection of Captain Glaze,

the master of the schooner "Gleam," which was one of the vessels engaged in the trade.

Clif and Ben soon made themselves great favorites aboard the schooner with the captain, the mate, and William Flint, an able seaman who bossed the lascars.

They took a particular fancy to Flint, because he proved an inexhaustible storehouse of wonderful adventures in Indian waters, and along the coast, as well as the interior of the big peninsula.

On the afternoon our story opens he had been telling them about an astonishing adventure he had participated in during the previous year.

He and a small party had started on business for a town fifty miles inland from the shore of the Strait of Manaar.

Not far from their destination their guide deserted them, leaving them in a pretty bad fix.

They were forced to keep on without him, and, as a consequence, got lost in one of the numerous Indian jungles, which Flint declared were as bad as a labyrinth to one unacquainted with the country.

After wandering several days at random they came upon one of the small temples so numerous in India.

This was a particularly sacred one, hidden in the depths of the jungle, and dedicated to a deity called Jumna.

They entered the edifice unobserved and obtained a close view of the idol representing Jumna.

Flint declared that this particular god was famed throughout the country for the wonderful blue stone it wore in the center of a gold star affixed to the region of the stomach.

This stone was an enormous sapphire of exceptional purity which had been cut with astonishing skill to resemble the human eye.

There wasn't a native, however ignorant, who had not heard about this great blue stone, and marvelous properties were ascribed to it.

It was said that on the annual festival of the god Jumna, which was observed with many religious rites at the temple, the blue eye of the idol would wink with great solemnity a number of times.

No intelligent foreigner believed any such yarn as that, but the natives put absolute faith in the alleged fact, and hundreds of them asserted with every evidence of sincerity that they had seen the eye move in its socket.

Probably it did move through some chicanery of the priests in charge of the temple, for it was to their interest to keep up the reputation of the god.

Clif and Ben had not been long enough in India to learn about this big blue stone with its mysterious qualities, and consequently showed their ignorance about it when Flint spoke of it.

That led to his query with which this chapter opens.

"No," replied Clif, "neither of us ever heard about it. It must be a fine stone, and I'd give a whole lot to see it."

"I reckon ye are not likely to see it, my hearty," replied Flint.

"Why not? Couldn't Ben and I hire a guide at one of those villages along shore to take us to the temple of Jumna?"

"Ye couldn't hire a guide to do that for love nor money," replied the sailor, wagging his head in a very positive manner.

"We couldn't?"

"No, ye couldn't. It's ag'in their religion to do it. Foreigners are not allowed to inspect that there idol."

"But you and your friends inspected it," said Clif.

"That was an accident, and we came near losin' our lives. The priest told us we had committed a sacrilege, but one of the party squared him by the present of a fine pearl he owned. That there pearl saved our bacon. Them priests will wink at anythin' if you pay 'em enough. Had the common natives nabbed us in that shrine we'd never have got out alive, pearl or no pearl. I believe a million dollars in British sov'rings wouldn't have saved us. Them ordinary critters are the worst fanatics about their religion ye ever seen. The priests, who are high caste and somewhat educated rascals, play 'em for all they're worth."

"What does that Jumna idol look like, anyway?"

"You've seen a tailor, haven't ye, squattin' with crossed legs on a table?"

"Sure, I have," said Clif.

"So have I," chipped in Ben. "Does it look like a tailor?"

"No. It only has the attitude of a tailor, otherwise it looks like a Chinese joss with a small pagoda on his head. It has strings of all kinds of valuable gems hangin' from its shoulders, and a rope of the finest pearls you ever seen in your life slung around its neck close under the chin. The whole thing is made of dark bronze with gold trimmin's."

"Real gold?" asked Ben.

"I couldn't swear that it's real gold, for I didn't get close enough to the old thing to make sure of it, but it looks enough like gold to be taken for it."

"The big blue stone is worn on the idol's stomach, you say?" said Clif.

"Yes. It's the center-piece of a large blue star."

"Does it look like a human eye?" asked Ben.

"It looks enough like it to give you the shivers."

"What does the idol stand on?"

"On the top of three solid blocks of some kind of stone, each smaller than the lower one, like a pair of steps."

"How much do you suppose that blue stone is worth?"

"I should reckon it's worth a mighty big sum of money."

"Isn't the door of the temple locked?"

"It hasn't got no door to it, jest a big openin' facin' the jungle."

"I suppose it's guarded all the time?" said Clif.

"We didn't see no guard. All we seen was the priest, who came out of a small room to one side. He turned black with fury when he seen us in that there temple, and began sayin' somethin' that only one of our party understood. It was a good thing he did understand the fellow's lingo. If he hadn't—"

"Well?" said Ben, as the sailor paused.

"We'd have been angels long afore this."

"How many were there in your party?"

"Four."

"You had some kind of arms, didn't you?" asked Clif.

"We had our knives, and the fellow who was expert at Hindoo had a revolver."

"Then why need you have been afraid of a single priest?"

"He had his hand on a bell-rope. Had he pulled it, as he easily could have done, he would have had help enough around him in two minutes to have done us up, all right."

The chap who understood and spoke the same dialect as the priest had presence of mind enough to chip in a little palaver at the right minute. The priest listened with his hand on the bell-rope. Then he offered to let us off if we'd swear to keep our visit to the temple a secret and come up with enough to satisfy his greed. The pearl was the only thing we had worth his notice, and he let the matter go at that."

"How did you escape from the jungle?"

"The priest furnished us with a guide and so we reached our destination."

"Gee! But you had a hot time of it," laughed Clif.

"I reckon we did, my hearty," replied Flint, starting to fill his pipe.

At that moment Ben, who glanced in the direction of the diving-boats, jumped on his feet with an exclamation.

"Look, Clif, look!" he cried, pointing across the water. "There's something doing among the boatmen."

Clif got on his feet, and so did Flint, and the three walked over to the starboard rail to get a better look.

CHAPTER II.

HOW THE SHARK-CHARMER IS MADE TO WALK THE PLANK.

"Looks like a row," suggested Clif, after taking a good view of the scene of the disturbance.

"That's what it does," coincided Ben. "Hello! They've started for the schooner. There's something wrong for fair."

"I thought the boats were not permitted to leave the diving ground until the signal gun is fired?" said Clif, looking at Flint.

"They hain't, but them chaps seem to be so excited over somethin' that's happened that they've overlooked the regulations," replied the sailor.

"It's probably lucky for them that Captain Glaze is ashore," said Ben.

"Well, Mr. Robertson, the mate, will make it just as hot for them if they deserve it," said Clif.

By this time the excited cries which had first attracted the attention of those on the schooner's deck had been exchanged by the boatmen for a weird chant to which every oar kept time.

Erect in the stern of the foremost boat an old white-headed man led the song, while at the end of each measure the voice of every boatman raised a chorus that seemed to fairly lift the boats out of the water.

Although Clif and Ben were unaware of the fact the song was made up by the old singer as the boats came on, the refrain or chorus being the same all the way through.

The words referred to some incident which had happened at the diving ground, and was the cause of the present manifestation.

All that the boys could make out of it was something about a diver and a shark, and then something about a charm-seller.

Flint, however, seemed to understand the drift of the song, and translated its import to the boys.

The boats having reached the side of the schooner the chant ceased abruptly, the heavy oars were noisily shipped and, amid a perfect babel of voices, the boatmen came swarming up the side, until the deck was one mass of wildly-gesticulating, dusky humanity.

The white-headed boatman, who towered head and shoulders above his comrades, pushed his way to the front, and commanding silence among his followers, addressed himself to the mate of the schooner.

"Sa'b," said he in pigeon English, "one year back big sa'b [meaning Captain Glaze] ordered Salambo eat plenty blows for sellin' charm to diver-man. All same, this season he come back and sell plenty charm, tellin' diver-man to put charm 'round neck, shark no eat him up. He tell plenty lie—this aft'noon one shark done come, eat diver, charm, all!"

"Let him stand forward," replied Mr. Robertson, with difficulty suppressing a grin.

The culprit, a sleek old fellow with shaven head, crafty eyes, and a rosary of wooden beads about his neck, was shoved to the fore.

"Are you the chap who was whipped off the grounds last year for selling charms?" demanded the mate.

"I same rascal," admitted the fellow, salaaming until his shaven head almost touched the deck.

"He's a cheeky rooster, upon my word," remarked Clif.

"I'm bound to say that I admire his nerve," said Ben.

"I wonder what the mate will do with him?" said Clif.

"I know what I'd do with him," chuckled Ben.

"What would you do with him?" asked Clif.

"I'd give him a dose of his own physic."

"I don't catch your meaning."

"I'd make him walk the plank in regular pirate style."

"What! You'd give him to the sharks!" almost gasped Clif.

"He boasts about the efficacy of his shark charms that he sells to the boatmen, why not compel him to give a public test of their value? If a shark comes along and fails to gobble him up it will give his business a boom. I believe in encouraging trade."

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed Clif. "Why don't you suggest your idea to the mate?"

"I will if you back me up."

"I'll do it on one condition," replied Clif.

"What is your condition?"

"That you also suggest that two of the lascars take a boat and lie under the schooner's quarter in readiness to pick the rascal up as soon as he comes to the surface after his plunge. It would be carrying the joke altogether too far to let the old sinner be actually caught by a shark, for of course his charm is a pure fake."

"I accept your amendment," replied Ben. "All I want to do is to give the rascal a good scare."

Accordingly the two boys walked over to the spot where the mate and the charm-seller stood.

"What did you think of doing to this man?" asked Ben of Mr. Robertson.

"Give him three dozen lashes on the back."

"I know a better punishment for him," said Ben.

Salambo heard his words, which he readily understood, and favored the boy with a wicked look.

The mate looked at Ben in some surprise, and then said:

"What is it?"

"Come this way and I'll tell you."

Mr. Robertson and the two boys retired a few steps and then Ben outlined his scheme for giving the charm-seller the shock of his life.

The idea appealed to the waggish side of the mate and he agreed to put it into execution.

He motioned to Flint and ordered him to have the boat lowered and in position to pick Salambo up.

Then he walked up to the old villain.

"Do you happen to have one of those charms about you?"

"One here got, sa'b," replied the rascal, producing from the folds of his waist-cloth a fragment of palmleaf covered with cabalistic characters. "Sa'b like to buy? Sell cheap. Sure 'tection 'gin shark. No eat pusson got one dese 'bout him."

"Keep it yourself," replied the mate, "you'll soon need it. Hi, lascar!" to one of the schooner's crew who stood near. "Fetch a plank here and run it out over the side."

By the time the plank was brought and run out until half of its length projected over the water Flint came up and by a sign intimated that the boat was in readiness.

The crowd of natives, guessing that something unusual was on the tapis, craned their necks eagerly.

The charm-seller seemed to guess what was in store for him, and, being ignorant of the fact that a boat was waiting to pick him up directly he rose from his involuntary bath, began to give plain symptoms of fright.

He flopped down on his knees and begged for mercy.

The mate, aware that the old villain would incur little danger, was deaf to all his appeals, and made a signal to the lascars to run the old man out on the plank.

The quaking wretch was seized and dragged to the schooner's side.

His rolling orbs met the laughing glances of the two boys.

Ascribing his persent unhappy predicament to them he favored them with a look so diabolical that they shuddered in spite of themselves.

"Lord!" palpitated Ben. "If there isn't murder in that fellow's eye I don't know what the look is like."

The rascal was placed upon the plank.

"One, two, three—let him slide!" cried the mate.

The deck end of the plank rose high in the air, then descended with a crash, and with a scream of terror the charm vendor disappeared over the side.

A tremendous shout rose from the natives on the deck, and with one accord they all rushed to the schooner's side, which they reached just as Salambo's head reappeared above the surface.

Another moment and he was dragged into the boat by the two lascars, where, catching sight of the laughing countenances of the two boys at the rail above, he shook his fist at them in mute menace, and was rowed ashore.

"I guess that will teach him a lesson that he won't forget in a hurry," said Ben as he and his companion watched the boat recede.

"Maybe it will," replied Clif. "However, we're not likely to see him again."

But in this forecast of the future he was mistaken, as events speedily proved.

CHAPTER III.

IN WHICH CLIF DISCOVERS A SMALL FORTUNE IN PEARLS.

"Say, Ben, let's ask permission of Captain Glaze to go ashore," said Clif on the following afternoon. "I'm tired of monkeying around the deck of this schooner."

"I'm with you," replied Ben. "Any kind of a change will suit me."

"I suppose it's up to me to ask the skipper," said Clif.

"Yes. Your father put us in his charge. He won't let us go alone, you can bet."

"Flint will be just the man to go with us."

"But he's busy."

"What of it? The captain can let him off duty."

"Well, run along and make your application. I'll wait here till you get back."

Clif walked aft and entered the cabin.

It was a fine day, with a cloudless sky.

The breeze was so light and fitful that it barely ruffled the surface of the sea about the schooner.

The boys had been over to the diving-ground all morning and now that they had had their dinner they were longing for some fresh kind of excitement.

Captain Glaze listened to Clif's request and did not seem to quite approve of it.

"I haven't anybody to send with you," he said, knitting his brows.

"Couldn't Flint go?" asked Clif.

"I can't spare him," replied the captain.

The boy looked disappointed.

"Isn't there anybody else that could go with us?" he asked.

"Nobody I could trust you with."

"Can we take the small boat and row as far as the beach and back?"

"You could do that if you will promise not to go further than the beach."

"All right, sir. Is it dangerous for us to visit one of the villages alone?"

"Not particularly; but you might get into trouble in some way, and I can't afford to take any chances. I am responsible for your safety and return to Madras."

So Clif returned to the deck and his friend, and told Ben the result of his interview with the skipper.

"We'll go as far as the shore, anyway," said Ben. "It will be a good idea to carry our revolvers along and a pocketful of cartridges. I don't expect we'll have any occasion to use them unless we see a shark en route, and then we can take a pop at him. I wouldn't mind killing a good-sized man-eater if only to get revenge for the death of that diver who was eaten up yesterday afternoon because he put too much faith in that charm Salambo sold him. I wouldn't feel so awfully bad if I heard that a shark got hold of the old villain himself. He's a fakir of the first water."

"What kind of water?"

"Sea water, of course," grinned Ben.

"If we had liberty to go ashore we might meet the rascal again."

"I'm not anxious to meet him. He's got it in for us, for he holds us responsible for the plank-walking incident."

"What of it?" replied Clif. "He wouldn't dare play any trick on us."

"You can't tell what he might dare to do. Look at the nerve he had to come back to the grounds to sell his bogus charms after having been whipped for the same offense last year."

"I must admit that he's a sly old codger."

"Sly isn't the word. He's a past-master in wickedness."

You saw the look he gave us just because the lascars shoved him on the plank."

"I did. It was a bad one."

"A sort of concentrated essence of hate. Then, after the boat picked him up he shook his fist at us. He means to get square if he can."

"How can he? We're under Captain Glaze's protection."

"We wouldn't be under the captain's protection ashore—that is, only so far as his influence obtains in this neighborhood."

"Well, in broad daylight, with a revolver apiece in our clothes, I guess there is little fear of Salambo doing us."

The boys got into the small boat alongside, took up the oars and began to row toward the near-by shore.

They took their time, for it was mighty hot.

Finally they reached the beach, got out of the boat and secured it to the shore by means of a stake.

"These sands are like an oven," remarked Clif, lifting his helmet to cool his dripping forehead.

"Yes, the shore feels hotter than blazes," coincided Ben, lifting his helmet, too.

"Come on, there's a row of banyan trees yonder. We can sit in the shade and look around."

There was a small village near by of thatched huts.

A crowd of natives were gathered around a dusky-looking man who was standing on an elevation in the middle of the mob apparently addressing the others.

The gathering was shouting and gesticulating in a strenuous kind of way.

"I wonder what's going on there?" Clif said curiously.

"Ask me something easier, Clif. Maybe they're holding a political meeting."

"They are—like fun! They seem to be buying something. See those chaps walking out of the crowd with their arms full of brown things."

"Let's go over and see what's on foot," suggested Ben.

"The captain made me promise that we wouldn't go very far from the shore."

"That isn't far. Only about a couple of hundred yards," replied Ben.

Clif allowed himself to be persuaded, so the boys got up and approached the group.

They soon discovered that the black man in the center of the crowd was auctioning off some pearl oysters.

The boys had heard about these sales, which were eagerly patronized by the natives, who sometimes got great bargains, though most of the time nothing to speak of.

"It's a kind of lottery, like the sales held once or twice a year by the express companies in the States," said Clif. "The natives bid on a lot of oysters on the chance of finding some valuable pearls in them. They're crazy over the game ever since one of the natives found over sixty big pearls in some oysters he had bought in, and made his fortune for life. Although these chaps seldom find a pearl of any great value they all hope that some day luck will come to them, and that they'll get rich right off the reel."

"There is always the chance," replied Ben. "I'd like to have a go myself, just for the fun of the thing."

"We couldn't bid. We don't know what to offer."

"Any old price would do as long as it's low."

"The auctioneer wouldn't understand us."

"Ask one of the natives to do it for us."

"How could we? We can't speak their lingo."

Ben had to admit that there appeared to be insurmountable difficulties in their way, and reluctantly gave up the idea.

At that moment he spied a native who had been aboard the schooner, and whom he knew could speak English after a fashion.

On the spur of the moment he rushed up to the fellow and told him what they wanted to do.

The native grinned, nodded and pushing his way forward bid in a batch of oysters for the boys at an absurdly low figure.

Clif handed him the coin with another for himself.

The native gathered up the oysters and handed them to the boys.

They were dirty-looking objects, and smelt horribly, for they had been several days out of water, standing in the sun in a small pyramid.

"Gee! But they smell like a putrid sewer," cried Ben, holding his nose. "Where shall we take them, Clif? To the boat?"

"No, under the palms where we were sitting down awhile ago."

They carried the lot to the shady spot, laid them on the ground and got out their jackknives.

"Hang me, if I care much to open them," said Ben, contemplating their purchase with an air of disgust.

"The stench is something terrible, I must admit," answered Clif, fingering one of the oyster shells gingerly.

"Our fingers will smell for a week," said Ben. "I don't believe we'll find a pearl in them, anyway."

"Don't be a quitter," laughed Clif. "It was your idea to buy them."

"I know it was, but I didn't expect to buy something that smells like a morgue."

"Well, let's divide them up and try our luck. There are twenty of them. I'll let you have first pick, then if there's a fine pearl in one of them we won't have any excuse to quarrel over it. It will belong to the one who selected the oyster."

Accordingly they each picked ten oysters alternately, and then, with no very great enthusiasm, began to open them, one at a time.

The opening of the bivalves was attended with a more acute smell that almost turned the boys' stomachs.

"Say, no more of this for me," said Ben, holding up his slimy and foul-smelling fingers after tossing away his tenth and last oyster. "This is a regular sell. Not a solitary pearl have either of us found for our filthy work."

"I've got one oyster left," said Clif.

"You'd better fire it away without letting out any more skunk odors," said Ben.

"It might contain a handsome pearl."

"If it does I'll eat the oyster."

"Yes, you would. I think I see you doing it. You wouldn't even make a bluff at doing it for a hundred-dollar bill."

"You bet I wouldn't. There's poison enough in one of these rotten oysters to depopulate a village."

Clif picked up the last oyster, which was a good-sized fellow.

"How much am I offered for this last bivalve?" he grinned.

"Hold on there! Don't shove it in my direction. I know when I've had enough of anything," objected Ben. "I'm going down to the water to wash my hands."

"Wait till we see if there's anything in this fellow and then I'll go with you."

Ben waited, but without any great display of interest.

The chances of their finding a pearl in the last oyster did not strike him as being very favorable.

Clif, after a flourish of his arm, forced open the shell of the bivalve.

As his eye caught a glance of the interior of the shell he uttered a shout.

It contained a magnificent pearl.

CHAPTER IV.

HOW FORTUNE PLAYS THE BOYS A SLIPPERY TRICK.

"Gracious!" gasped Ben, while Clif regarded his prize with staring eyes.

So taken up were they with the good fortune which had come to Clif through the putrid oyster that neither of them observed a black face with a clean shaven head thrust through the thick verdure around the foot of the palm tree behind them.

A pair of snaky eyes, glittering with craft and greed, peered cautiously at them and the opened oyster shells containing the pearl.

The intruder was Salambo, the shark-charmer, who had been sleeping in the grass, and who had been awakened by Clif's shout.

"There's no flies on this oyster," said Clif after he had recovered from his surprise.

"Bet your life there isn't. Let's see the pearl you've got."

Clif extracted the glistening globule from its unsightly case.

"A beauty!" he said. "I'll bet Captain Glaze will open his eyes when he sees this."

"I should remark," replied Ben. "Let me see it."

"Sure."

"Thanks," said Ben in a tone of satisfaction. "Hold on," he added as Clif was about to throw the shell away. "I see something yellow in one corner. Stick your knife in the meat, that side."

With the point of his knife Clif prodded the substance of the oyster at the point indicated, and presently laid bare a large pearl shaped like a pear, in luster of the purest pale yellow.

"A gold pearl!" exclaimed Clif. "I never saw one like that before."

"A gold pearl!" repeated Ben. "You're in great luck, old man. Don't you remember that the captain told us at dinner the other day that a gold pearl was a great rarity, found about once in twenty years? He said that though they were in no particular demand among foreigners, the wealthy natives, more particularly the Indian priests, were always anxious to obtain them, and were ready to pay an enormous price for a pure specimen."

"I remember. I guess I'll be able to make a good thing out of this one."

"I'll bet you will. Your father will be able to sell it for you."

Salambo, concealed behind the trunk of the banyan tree within a few feet of them, leaned eagerly forward.

So close was he to the boys that he could hear every word of their conversation.

As he listened an avaricious glitter shone in his crafty eyes, and he rubbed his hands unctuously together.

He knew the value of a golden pearl as well as any person in India.

The possession of such a gem would mean a fortune to him, for he had in his mind's eye a priest who was very eager to obtain a yellow pearl of pure water.

He would be able to name his own price.

So he resolved by hook or by crook to get that gold pearl away from Clif Halliday.

That would be as good as any revenge he could take upon the boy.

The boys walked down to the water's edge and cleaned their hands as thoroughly as they were able, but they could not entirely remove the fetid smell of the putrid oyster meat.

Then they returned to the shade of the banyan tree, utterly unconscious that their movements were under the observation of as big and crafty a rascal as the sun ever shone upon.

Clif had taken the chamois covering from his watch and put the pearls in it as a temporary receptacle until they returned aboard the schooner.

He now took the chamois bag out of his pocket so that he and Ben could examine the silver globule with its solitary yellow mate at their leisure.

When the boys went down to the water Salambo gritted his teeth with savage disappointment, for he thought they were about to take to their boat and go back to the schooner.

Such a move on their part would, in all probability, have put the yellow pearl, which he prized the most, out of his reach.

It was with unbounded satisfaction that he saw them turn around, after washing their hands, and return to the shade of the tree.

Clif rubbed off each pearl carefully with his handkerchief, and then he and Ben examined and commented upon them separately, the gold pearl coming in as the finale of their inspection.

At length he returned them to the chamois bag and wrapped the bag in his handkerchief, which he knotted.

"Nobody would dream that there's a king's ransom in that little bundle," he said, holding it up lightly.

As he spoke a dusky, naked arm was thrust forward through the leaves, sinewy fingers grabbed the handkerchief, and it was wrenched from his grasp.

Clif and Ben were both too astonished to make a move for a moment or two, then they sprang to their feet to make things warm for the thief.

"There he goes!" cried Ben, pointing to the rascal, who was running in the direction of the village as hard as he could go.

Both recognized the old villain on the instant.

"It's that scoundrel, Salambo!" ejaculated Clif.

"He'll get away with the goods if we don't look lively," said Ben.

The boys started after the shark-charmer as fast as they could.

They found to their mortification that the old man could run as fast as they.

"He'll escape us. Let us fire at him," said Ben, drawing his revolver.

"No, no," returned Clif. "We might hit one of the villagers, and then we'd get into trouble. We must try to catch him somehow."

Salambo, however, soon vanished behind one of the thatched houses, and when the boys reached the hut there was no sign of him.

"We'll have to hunt him out," said Clif. "This village isn't so large."

They hunted the shark-charmer in vain, and were subjected to the stares of the native men, women and children.

"There's the man who bought the oysters for us," said Ben. "He speaks English pretty well. Let's hire him to help us."

Clif was willing to do anything that promised to bring him back his pearls, so the native was stopped and interviewed.

"Salambo, eh?" grinned the man, whose name was Kurhora. "Him big rascal."

"Bet your life he is," replied Ben. "We want to catch him."

"What for, sa'b?"

"He stole something from us."

"Me seen him makin' tracks for village down dat way," said Kurhora, pointing.

"You help us catch him and we'll pay you well," said Clif.

"Me help. No like Salambo. Much big rascal."

"Lead the way, then, and step lively," said Ben impatiently.

Stepping out lively was hot work for the boys, but under the circumstances they did not mind it so much, as their thoughts were centered in the stolen pearls.

"I'm breaking my word to Captain Glaze, but I guess we've a good excuse," said Clif as they hurried along toward the next village, which they could see in the distance.

"Oh, shoot Captain Glaze! I guess we can take care of ourselves," replied Ben.

"It's getting on to sundown. I hope this chase will end at yonder village."

"Suppose the rascal has gone on further? Are you going to follow him?"

"Yes," replied Clif doggedly. "I don't mean that he shall have the laugh on us, as well as the profit of those pearls. The fellow would be made for the rest of his life."

"I'd like to fill him full of holes for giving us all this trouble," said Ben.

"He deserves some kind of punishment, but I'll be satisfied if I get the pearls back."

The perspiration was running off them when they reached the village.

Kurhora led them hither and thither, making inquiries in the native tongue.

Finally a man was found who knew Salambo.

He furnished the unpalatable information that the shark-charmer had gone on to another village in the interior.

"Gee! That's bad," said Ben. "What shall we do about it?"

"Follow him," replied Clif tersely.

"He may have friends there who are likely to stand up for him, and we may get into all kinds of trouble," said Ben.

"I'm ready to chance that," replied Clif. "I can't afford to let that rascal get away with my property."

"It will be dark before we can get back to our boat, and later still when we reach the schooner. Captain Glaze will have fits over our absence. He won't let us come ashore alone any more."

"I don't care as long as I recover those pearls."

The promise of an additional rupee induced Kurhora to lead the way to the village Salambo was reported to have made for.

"I've an idea we'll catch him there, for he'll believe he has thrown us off his track," said Clif.

"I hope so," responded Ben.

A kind of roadway led to the village in question, and the three followed it.

The boys were compelled to stop and rest several times as the heat told heavily on them.

The guide didn't seem to mind it, but then he was accustomed to the climate.

In the course of two hours, or about sundown, they reached the village.

Clif decided that they would attract too much attention by showing themselves in the place, and this would put Salambo on his guard if he was there.

Kurhora was therefore instructed to enter the village alone and investigate the whereabouts of the shark-charmer.

If he succeeded in finding where the rascal had taken refuge he was to return at once and report to the boys.

"We'll wait at the foot of this tree till you get back," said Clif to the guide. "Understand?"

"Me understandin', sa'b," replied Kurhora, who then entered the village on his mission.

"Gee! We're having quite an adventure after all, Clif," said Ben, lying down on the grass and fanning his heated brow with his helmet.

"That's what we are. On the whole, I'm beginning to feel sorry that we found those pearls. It goes against my grain to lose them to that rascal above all others. I wonder how he knew we had them?"

"He must have seen us buy the oysters and then followed us, and hid himself in the grass under the banyan."

"How could he guess that we were likely to find pearls in those oysters? We didn't suspect the fact ourselves. Nobody could possibly tell what those oysters contained besides putrid meat until they were opened and inspected."

"Maybe he followed us to play some trick on us in revenge for yesterday afternoon's incident," said Ben.

"That's more like it. When he saw we had found valuable pearls, particularly that gold one, he made up his mind to steal them and succeeded."

The boys gradually cooled off while awaiting their guide's return.

"It will soon be dark," said Ben. "Even if we started back at once it would take us about three hours to reach the place where we left our boat. I'll bet the skipper has sent Flint ashore by this time to look us up."

"A number of the natives of the village there saw us start for the other village with Kurhora, and that will give Flint, if he comes ashore after us, a clue to the direction we've taken," said Clif.

"Oh, what's the odds? We'll get back all right. Our guide knows it's money in his pocket to treat us right."

A noise behind them at that moment attracted their attention.

Turning to look they were suddenly seized, each by a sinewy pair of arms, and thrown on their faces.

In that position they were quickly bound by thongs and turned over again on their backs.

Then they were raised into a sitting posture.

They were so surprised by the attack made upon them, as well as taken at sudden disadvantage, that they were able to make but slight resistance in their own behalf.

When they looked to see who their enemies were their eyes lighted on the very individual they were in quest of—the shark-charmer, Salambo, and there was a look of gratified malice on his crafty countenance that did not augur well for the future of the two boys.

CHAPTER V.

A STARTLING OCCURRENCE.

"How you feel now, eh, sa'bs?" grinned Salambo, making a mock bow to them.

"What do you mean by treating us in this manner, you villain?" cried Clif angrily.

"S'pose you tell why make Salambo walk plank yesterday af'noon, eh?" he replied.

"That was only a joke. It didn't hurt you any."

"Salambo no see joke. S'pose shark come up, catch him, bite him in two. What then, eh?"

"You had a charm with you to protect yourself, didn't you?"

Salambo grinned unpleasantly.

It was clear that he placed no great faith in his own charms.

"You play your joke, sa'b. Now Salambo play joke, too. How like dat?"

"Where are those pearls you stole from me, you rascal? You'd better hand them over or Captain Glaze will make it hot for you."

"No care for big sa'b. Me shore. Him on schooner."

"He'll send a party on shore to hunt you down."

"No find Salambo. Me go way long distance. No need sell more charm. Me well fixed. No work more. Live like prince."

"I see what you mean, you scoundrel. You intend to sell those pearls, and go to some other part of India to live."

"Sa'b make good guess. He heap wise boy," grinned the shark-charmer.

Clif considered the situation a moment or two.

"I tell you what I'll do with you," he said. "Hand over the white pearl and release us and you may keep the gold one."

"No good do dat," the rascal answered. "When me done with sa'bs you no need anyt'in'."

Salambo's remark sounded rather ominous.

The boys wondered what his intentions were toward them.

Did he mean to kill them in revenge for the fright their trick had given him?

The outlook was certainly not a pleasant one.

Salambo gave some directions to his comrades.

A rude wagon was brought forward, in the shafts of which was a one-eyed, sorry-looking horse.

The boys were shoved into it as though they were logs, two of the natives followed, while a third got on the seat, with the shark-charmer beside him, and started the horse ahead.

The course they took skirted the village, and when they reached the other side they went on into the interior.

"This is a nice fix were in now," said Clif to his friend, who lay stretched out beside him in the bottom of the wagon.

"I should say so," returned Ben. "If we don't see our finish we'll be lucky."

"I can't imagine what the old rascal means to do with us."

"He doesn't mean us any good, that's certain."

"He seems to hold all the cards in his hands."

"He's taken two tricks so far, and the next may finish the game."

"And us as well."

"I hope not, but things look pretty blue."

The wagon was a rickety affair, and the road full of ruts, so that the boys got an unpleasant shaking up during the ride.

Ben growled every time he got a good bounce, and finally said that he was getting as sore all over as a healthy boil.

It came on dark, but the sky was bright with numerous stars.

Salambo and his companions talked among themselves in their native dialect, and the shark-charmer appeared to be in an excellent humor.

"No wonder," thought Clif, "when he's got the upper hand of us, as well as a fortune in pearls in his possession. It seems as if we've been riding hours in this wagon, and yet I see no indications of a stoppage for the night."

Another hour went by and the country grew wilder and more lonesome.

The boys were not aware of this fact, as they couldn't see anything but the high wooden sides of the cart.

By and by the moon rose, making the night a gorgeous one.

Occasionally the wagon passed a solitary hut by the way-side.

There were no signs of life about these dwellings, but they seemed to be inhabited.

The cry of some wild animal could occasionally be heard in the distance, but otherwise the night was still.

At length the wagon entered a wood and traveling for some distance came to a halt in a clearing.

The natives jumped down and two of them began gathering the material for a fire.

The fire was lighted and wood put on it till it became quite a ruddy blaze.

The boys could see its reflection on the leaves and branches of the trees.

Salambo and his gang gathered about the fire and produced some food from the folds of the cloth about their waists.

This they ate leisurely, carrying on an animated conversation all the while.

No attention was paid to the boys in the wagon.

"I wonder if we're going to stay here all night?" said Clif.

"I wouldn't be surprised. I'm pretty hungry, do you know? I wish we were on board the schooner."

"You don't wish it any more than I do," replied Clif. "We made a mistake in chasing Salambo. It might be bad enough to lose those pearls, but they didn't cost anything worth mentioning. It would be a great sight worse if we lost our lives. These chaps could put us out of the way and bury us in this wood so that our parents would never get the slightest clue as to our fate."

Ben didn't feel easy over his companion's suggestion.

Salambo's words that when he was done with them they wouldn't need anything, and the fact that they were wholly at the rascal's mercy, furnished the boy with unpleasant food for thought.

After Salambo and his companions had finished their al fresco meal the fire was replenished.

The shark-charmer and two of the natives lay down to rest while the fourth sat up on watch.

The boys lay awake for hours, tortured by anxiety and hunger, and then fell into an uneasy slumber.

They awoke at intervals during the night to find no change in the situation.

The fire continued to burn brightly, and the natives took turns in watching the encampment.

The moon went down and finally morning dawned.

Soon afterwards all hands were astir and the journey was resumed without any particular attention being paid to the prisoners.

After an hour's travel the wagon came to a stop before a native hut.

Salambo interviewed the Hindoo who lived there and secured some provisions of a simple kind.

A portion of this was allotted to Clif and Ben, and they were partially unbound and told to eat.

They were very glad to do so, though the food was not particularly to their liking.

They ate the cakes and drank the sweetened water with a relish and were then tied up again.

Salambo and his bunch ate their breakfast, then the horse and cart were started on again.

The fact that they were still alive when Salambo had such an excellent chance to put them out of the way during the preceding night somewhat revived the drooping spirits of the boys.

"I guess he doesn't intend to kill us," Clif said to his friend as the cart jogged along across the country; "but I'd give something to know where the rascal is taking us, and why he is carrying us so far away from the coast."

"It wouldn't do us any good to know," returned Ben. "He's bent on getting square with us in some measly way. I wouldn't be surprised if he intends to leave us in some far-away and secluded place to starve to death, or maybe hand us over to a band of thugs to be strangled."

The latter suggestion sent a shiver through Clif.

Both he and Ben had read enough about the murderous fraternity to fear contact with them.

While it was true that these religious scoundrels were

not near so numerous in India as they had once been, there were still enough of them scattered around the country to make the name feared.

Murder for plunder was their trade, and they lived chiefly upon the property obtained from their victims, who were invariably strangled by a rope or cloth at a moment when they were off their guard.

"Can't you think of something pleasant instead of bringing up such a subject as that?" asked Clif.

"The idea occurred to my mind, and I couldn't help mentioning it," answered Ben gloomily.

Clif did not reply, and the boys remained silent for some time, during which the cart continued on its way at the same old pace.

Along about noon a stop was made at another solitary habitation.

Here more food was obtained, and the boys received a share as before.

The meal, however, was not eaten near the dwelling, but in a lonesome spot a mile distant where the party rested for perhaps an hour when the journey was renewed.

"Captain Glaze is in a big stew over us by this time," said Clif.

"I'll bet he is."

"I'll wager he has several parties out scouring the country."

"Probably Salambo has a pretty good idea of what course the captain would pursue as soon as we were missed, and that is why he is carrying us so far inland."

"I wish we could get our hands loose. We could make it mighty hot for these rascals with our revolvers. It's a wonder they didn't search us when they captured us."

"Salambo couldn't have considered us worth searching."

"He'd have found a fine gold watch on you if he had, and some rupees on both of us."

"Probably he'll search us later on when we reach our destination."

"Kurhora is bound to report that we disappeared on the outskirts of that village he piloted us to. Don't you think that the captain will send a search party into the interior after us?"

"There is little doubt that he will. The question is, will he hit the direction Salambo has taken?"

"I'm afraid his attempt to find us will be like hunting for a needle in a haystack. India is a big country, and there are jungles and other lonesome places to burn in it. Flint said a jungle was little better than a labyrinth, and I'm willing to believe him, though I was never in one."

"Captain Glaze will leave no stone unturned to find us," said Clif hopefully. "He'll employ the most experienced guides he can find. He can't afford to return to Madras and report to my father that we have disappeared until he has exhausted every possible effort to find us."

"There isn't much doubt of that, but he has a mighty foxy old rascal to deal with. Salambo owes him a grudge, anyway, for the whipping he got last season. It will give him a whole lot of satisfaction to make the captain as much trouble as possible."

The boys continued to talk off and on during the whole of the long afternoon while the cart jolted along without a stop.

The half-blind, weary-looking nag seemed possessed of a

wonderful fund of vitality to keep the pace up so steadily, though it was true he went at no great speed.

No doubt he was accustomed to traveling for indefinite periods around the country, and took the present trip as a matter of course.

Apparently Salambo avoided the beaten track and kept at a distance from the scattered villages, for as far as the boys were aware the party met with no one except the residents of the out-of-the-way huts at which they had stopped to procure food.

They stopped at another of these dwellings just before sunset, got more food, and went on to a secluded spot to eat it.

This kind of provender was not at all to the boys' liking.

They were not used to it, besides their portion was very scanty, anyway, so that they felt half starved by this time.

It was just dark when the party entered the gloomy precincts of a dense jungle.

For an hour the cart continued on its way and then a halt was called at an open space where a fire was lighted and preparations made to pass the night as the previous one had been spent.

Hardly was the fire under way when a blood-curdling screech awoke the silence of the glade.

Something struck the cart with such force that it toppled over on one side, dumping the boys out toward the fire.

"Good Lord!" cried Clif, as his eyes raked back to the cart. "It's a tiger!"

CHAPTER VI.

A NIGHT IN AN INDIAN JUNGLE.

It was a tiger, and a mighty big one at that.

The boys had often seen and admired specimens of these man-eaters at the big American circus menageries.

It was one thing to view a captive beast behind the strong steel bars of his cage, but it was quite another to meet him at liberty in his native stamping grounds.

The unexpected appearance of this one carried consternation to Salambo and his associates.

They crouched around the fire in abject fear, that is, all of them but one who happened to be approaching the blaze with an armful of sticks.

He stopped in his tracks, petrified with terror, not daring to move.

The tiger remained crouching on the overturned cart, glaring at the party, his tail lashing the air.

The fire evidently deterred him from making a spring at the natives.

The feelings of the two bound boys, who were nearest to the beast, were pretty acute.

They expected that the tiger would pounce upon one of them at any minute.

They lay as inert as statues, hardly daring to wink an eyelid.

This fact, together with their general attitude, prevented the animal from giving them any particular attention.

Probably he took them for a couple of corpses, and he had no use for such things.

At length the tiger noticed the native with the wood.

The man was not in line with the fire and offered a fair mark for the beast.

The tiger crouched lower and lower, watching for a move on his part.

The native was careful not to make any.

Unfortunately for him, several of the sticks slipped away from his grasp.

The man made a convulsive grab at them.

In a moment the tiger was in the air.

The native's eye detected the spring the moment it was made, and with a yell of terror sprang for the fire.

The animal missed him by a hair, but the poor wretch plunged head foremost into the blaze, scattering the embers right and left.

Screaming with pain he sprang up with his waistband on fire and a score of burns on his person.

The fire was almost extinguished and the disappointed beast, in his eagerness to secure a human victim, no longer feared it.

He swung around and flew at the group of natives.

With howls of alarm the party scattered and fled, all but the wood carrier, whom the tiger caught.

The tragedy occurred within a few feet of the paralyzed boys.

The strain was too great on Clif.

He made a desperate struggle to escape and his bonds burst apart.

As he scrambled to his knees he saw the tiger carrying the insensible native off by the neck.

In another moment the animal vanished into the intricacies of the jungle, and for a few moments Clif heard the receding sounds of his passage through the underbrush.

* Then complete silence fell on the little encampment.

"Gee! That was a narrow shave," said Clif.

"Has he gone?" asked Ben fearfully.

"You mean the tiger?"

"Yes."

"He's gone, and carried off one of the natives in his mouth."

"Where are the others?"

"Skipped off."

"What's to become of us now?"

"We must get a move on, too."

"How can we when we're tied up?"

"I'm not tied. I'm free."

"Is that a fact?" asked Ben eagerly.

"As sure as you live."

"Then cut me loose, will you?"

"Sure, I will, just as soon as I can get my jackknife out of my pocket."

In less than two minutes Clif relieved his comrade of the thongs that had held his arms so long.

"My arms feel almost paralyzed," said Ben.

"That's the way mine felt at first. The feeling won't last more than a minute or two."

"Where do you suppose Salambo and the other two fellows went?"

"They ran into the wood."

"They'll be back as soon as they get over their scare. We don't want to be here when they return."

"That's right, we don't," agreed Clif. "The further we're away from them the better."

"Where's the horse?"

"Tied to a stump close to where the fire was."

"How about the cart? Do you suppose we can use it to ride back?"

"I guess we can right it easily enough, and harness the nag to it."

"We're only about two days' journey from the coast. I guess we can find our way back."

"Probably, if we take the right direction."

"I should hope we wouldn't take the wrong direction," replied Ben. "Where do you imagine we are now, anyway?"

"How should I know? I haven't the remotest idea whether we've been traveling north, south or west. Of course we didn't go east, because the coast lies that way."

Ben scratched his chin reflectively.

"We might as well admit that we're as good as lost in the wilds of India, don't you think so?" he said.

"I'm willing to admit it."

"I think we can't do better than stay around this place till morning. I don't like the idea of venturing into the wood in the dark. We might run across another tiger, or a big snake, or some other live thing that might do us up."

"I agree with you there; but the trouble is Salambo and his friends are likely to return before long."

"Let them come. We've got our revolvers and can stand them off."

"We'll have to sit up all night and watch; that will leave us fagged out by the morning."

"We can watch by turn, can't we?"

"We can do that, I suppose," admitted Clif.

"I'll tell you what we'll do. Turn that cart entirely over and crawl under it. Then we'll be safe from any prowling wild animal, as well as from Salambo and his companions. They won't bother righting the cart till morning, and then we'll give them the surprise of their lives. We can even force that old villain to hand over the pearls under a threat of shooting him if he refuses."

"All right," replied Clif; "but one of us must watch while the other sleeps. We can take two-hour spells by my watch."

"Your watch ought to be stopped by this time."

"What of it? I can set it going again in about half a minute. I've got a match-safe. I'll set it at nine o'clock, which won't be so far out of the way. You can turn in first. I'll wake you around eleven, and then after you've stood guard till one you can rouse me up."

This arrangement was decided on, and the boys proceeded to turn the cart completely over.

Then they crawled under it from the rear, and five minutes later Ben was sound asleep, while Clif sat with his back against the front of the cart and kept his wits on the alert.

During his two-hour watch Clif heard all sorts of strange noises around the clearing.

Many kinds of animals made night hideous with their cries as they prowled about the jungle in search of food.

"It was a good idea of Ben's for us to get under cover when we had it at hand. I wouldn't care to travel through this wood in the dark. Salambo and his pals knew better, that's why they camped in this glade and lighted a fire as a kind of protection against the wild beasts. It's a wonder they don't come back. Perhaps they can't find the place again in the darkness. Probably they got separated and are roosting up trees for a change. No doubt they'll show up in the morning, for they'll want their horse and cart.

I'm afraid the horse will be a gone goose before the sun rises. I'd light a fire for his protection if I dared," said Clif to himself as he listened to the chorus of beasts round about.

The two hours of his watch passed slowly enough, but eleven by his watch came at last and Clif aroused Ben to relieve him.

"You'll have music enough to entertain you," said Clif with a chuckle.

"Music!" ejaculated Ben. "What do you mean?"

"Don't you hear the cries of the savage denizens of the forest?"

"Savage denizens of the forest is good," replied Ben with a grin which Clif couldn't see in the darkness. "I hear them. I guess we wouldn't have lasted long if we had tried to travel to-night. Salambo and his friends haven't turned up, eh?"

"Not to my knowledge, they haven't. If they had come back they would have lighted a fire."

"We might have done that as an additional protection."

"Then we'd have surely brought those rascals back here. Of two evils I'd rather take my chance without a fire. I don't think any beast can get at us here—that is, any beast likely to come this way."

"Well, turn in and take your forty winks," said Ben with a yawn.

"I'm going to. See that you don't go to sleep or something might happen that we wouldn't like."

Ben promised to keep awake and Clif lay down and was soon asleep.

An hour later Ben was startled by a cry from the horse.

There were sounds of a struggle, more cries from the nag and then silence in the glade.

Shortly afterward some animal came nosing around the inverted cart.

He tried to find an opening, but couldn't.

It was evident he smelt human flesh and blood, and was eager to get at it.

His actions kept Ben in a state of alarm.

The boy lighted a match and by the glare saw a good-sized paw scratching around under the back edge of the cart.

He took out his revolver, and putting it close to the roving paw, fired.

The animal gave a scream and drew off.

The report of the revolver awoke Clif, and Ben told him why he had fired.

Ben was troubled several times again, and so was Clif when he resumed his watch, but there was no more firing.

Altogether it was a night of alarm, and the boys didn't soon forget their first night's experience in an Indian jungle.

CHAPTER VII.

•IN THE GRASP OF SURE DEATH.

Daylight came soon after Clif went on watch for the third time, and he crawled out from under the cart and looked around.

It was a strange scene that met his eyes.

They were evidently in the midst of a dense tropical

looking forest, and Clif at once decided that it was an Indian jungle.

At any rate it corresponded with descriptions of jungles he had read about in books.

"Perhaps it's the very jungle that Flint and his party were last in. In that case Ben and I may happen to run across the temple of Jumna, where the god is that wears the famous big blue stone on his stomach. Gee! But I'd give a whole lot and take some risk to be able to say that I saw that god and the big blue stone face to face. It would be a big feather in our caps, bet your life. Hello! What's this?"

Clif stooped and picked up a small bundle.

"By George! If it isn't my handkerchief, and I'll bet the pearls are inside. Salambo must have lost it last night when he skipped out in such a hurry. Gee! This is great luck!"

He hastily unknotted the handkerchief and, as he anticipated, there was the chamois bag with the silver pearl and the gold one.

Clif was tickled to death.

He was so overjoyed that he rushed over to the wagon, awoke Ben and showed him the recovered pearls.

"Where did you find them?" asked Ben, highly pleased.

"By the dead embers of the fire."

"We haven't done so bad after all."

"Not if we can get out of the jungle alive."

"Are we in a jungle?" asked Ben in surprise.

"Looks like one. Doesn't it seem so to you? Take a look around."

Ben admitted that they were in a jungle as far as he could see.

"We're not very far in it," he said. "We hadn't reached it when Salambo stopped to get something to eat last night about sunset."

"How do you know we weren't in it then?"

"Because there weren't so many trees around and above us as there are now. We could see that much from the bottom of the cart."

"We could see precious little from the bottom of the cart except the sky," said Clif.

"Say, I think we'd better get away from here soon. Salambo will be back here looking for those pearls, you can gamble on it."

"There isn't any doubt of it if he wasn't gobbled up by some wild beast last night."

"No such good luck. Those kinds of chaps always light on their feet like a cat, and they have just as many lives. Where's the horse? Up Salt Creek?"

"Yes. He lies yonder half eaten. Some animal put him out of business."

"I heard him screech during the night, and thought he was in for it. Well, the cart is no good to us now. We'll have to do our traveling on foot."

"I don't mind, if we can reach the coast all right."

"I'd rather reach a restaurant or a hotel first," said Ben with a sickly grin. "My stomach feels awfully empty."

"It's likely to remain so for awhile, I'm afraid. I don't see any indications of breakfast coming our way."

"Well, what direction shall we go in? That's a very important point. If we take the wrong one——"

"The sun rises in the east, doesn't it?"

"That's what my geography said."

"The coast lies to the east. If we aim in the direction of the rising sun we ought to reach some part of the coast in time. I don't know any better course to follow."

"Go ahead, then, and I'll follow. Whatever you say goes with me."

"Then I'm the leader of this expedition?"

"You are. You're elected by unanimous vote."

"Then come on."

The boys started off in the direction of the glow of the rising sun and were soon threading their way through the jungle.

"Say, Ben," said Clif, "how would you like to run across the temple of Jumna—where the idol is with the big blue stone?"

"Tip top; but I'd rather run across a square meal first."

"Same here, but I wouldn't mind whether it was square, round or oblong, so long as it was a meal."

"Say, what the deuce is that thing yonder?" said Ben, pointing at an object showing above the grass on their right.

"As I'm not a mind reader or an Indian fakir I couldn't tell you. We'll go over and find out."

"Why, it's a pair of saddle-bags!" exclaimed Ben, as they drew near it.

"So it is, and a modern one, too. I wonder what it's doing here?" said Clif.

"Hello! Here's a fine rifle and a cartridge belt lying alongside of it. This must be our lucky day, Clif."

Ben picked up the gun, which bore the name of a noted English manufacturer, and slung the belt around his waist.

"If Salambo monkeys with us now I'll make him eat lead," he said.

Clif hauled the saddle-bags toward him and began to investigate the pockets.

The first thing he brought to light was a flask of brandy, with a Bombay trademark.

Then out came several small packages.

Opening one of them, Clif's eyes glistened as he saw that it contained some sandwiches made of meat and bread.

"Howling dervishes!" ejaculated Ben. "Grub?"

"That's what it is. Take one and get busy," said Clif, flopping down on the grass and digging his teeth into a sandwich.

"Gosh! But this tastes good," mumbled Ben, with his mouth full.

"Don't choke yourself, old man."

There were four of the sandwiches, and they disappeared in an incredibly short time.

"I wish I had a drink," said Ben. "If that brandy was only water, or even a light wine, I'd tackle it."

An investigation of the second saddle-bag resulted in the discovery of two flasks of soda.

The boys finished one of them between them.

"I feel like a fighting cock, b'gee!" said Ben, throwing out his chest. "I could eat a whole lot more, though."

"We can't afford to eat everything up at once. I'll carry these saddle-bags while you wrestle with the rifle," said Clif.

"Some English traveler owned this rifle and those bags," said Ben. "Something must have happened to him, for he wouldn't have voluntarily abandoned them."

"Yes, it is very odd that we should find them here in the

jungle," replied Clif. "It was a fortunate thing for us that we found the saddle-bags, at any rate. Might be the means of saving us from starvation."

"Those sandwiches did us a whole lot of good, bet your life," nodded Ben. "I felt as empty as a bag of wind."

"That rifle ought to come in very handy, Ben," said Clif. "We should be able to shoot some game that we can cook and eat on our way to the coast."

"Great idea," said Ben. "What game are we likely to find? Elephants?"

"Don't be funny. We'll find monkeys, for one thing."

"Oh, Lord! I couldn't eat a monkey."

"How do you know you couldn't if you were hungry enough?"

"I'd sooner shoot birds."

"Well, we'll shoot anything that looks good enough to eat when cooked."

After that Ben kept his weather eye lifting for some kind of game.

He saw plenty of monkeys, but he wouldn't throw a cartridge away on one.

Finally he wounded a bird of gay plumage that looked something like a quail in size and build.

Putting a fresh cartridge in the rifle he tossed the gun to Clif and then dashed into the underbrush after the wounded bird.

Why he paused to put that cartridge in the gun he never could explain afterward, but if he had not done it it is probable he never would have left the jungle alive.

Clif heard him beating around among the luxuriant vegetation in his efforts to locate the bird.

Several minutes passed, and then Clif heard his companion give a cry of terror, and immediately afterward he began shouting for help in a tone that showed something serious had happened to him.

Clif lost not a moment in hurrying to his assistance.

Ben's cries continued and directed his friend to the spot where he appeared to be making a desperate struggle with some denizen of the jungle.

It took Clif but a brief time to reach the scene of trouble, and then a sight met his gaze that fairly staggered him.

Ben was in the grasp of a huge boa constrictor, which was trying to get its tail around a big tree in order to secure the necessary purchase to squeeze its victim into a pulp.

CHAPTER VIII.

SAVED.

Clif uttered a gasp of consternation and then woke up to the necessity for instant action if Ben's life was to be saved.

The unfortunate boy's cries suddenly ceased.

The horror and apparent hopelessness of his situation had proved too much for him, and he relapsed into unconsciousness.

The noise made by Clif attracted the notice of the huge snake, and suspecting the presence of an enemy it stopped its movements and held up its hideous looking head in a wary manner.

Instantly Clif sank on one knee, took careful aim at one of the gleaming eyes and fired.

The ball went straight through the serpent's eye and

brain, and the great reptile began to thresh the verdure of the jungle in its death struggles.

Its winding folds held Ben in a close embrace, and the boy was rolled around and swung from side to side, while the snake's body whipped itself about like a live electric wire on a rampage.

Clif could do nothing further to finish the boa constrictor.

The serpent was practically dead, for its head followed the movements of the body in a limp and aimless fashion.

The vitality of the reptile, however, was great, and therein lay Ben's peril.

It loosened and then tightened its folds spasmodically, but Ben's arms being pressed against his body saved his ribs from fracture.

Had the snake got a firm grip on a tree before he was shot Clif's chum would in all probability have been squeezed to death.

Gradually the serpent's struggles grew less violent, and Clif, seeing his chance, got out his jackknife, and rushing forward began hacking away at its body where it encircled his friend.

He had the time of his life trying to make headway, though the knife was sharp, but as he cut partly through one fold after another of the three the strain on Ben was eased up till Clif was finally able to release him from his terrible position.

As Clif dragged Ben back to the spot where the saddle-bags lay the boy looked like death.

Clif was in a fever of anxious suspense over his companion's predicament.

Ben's white face, closed eyes, and inert condition was far from reassuring.

Clif fished the flask of brandy out of the compartment of one of the saddle-bags and forcing open Ben's mouth poured some of it down his throat.

No immediate result followed, and so Clif started in to bathe his friend's face and forehead with the cognac.

Many minutes passed before Clif's heart was gladdened by a faint sigh from Ben's lips.

This encouraged him to persevere in his treatment.

A second dram administered to the insensible boy brought on a spasmodic fit of coughing, at the end of which Ben opened his eyes.

"How do you feel, old man?" asked Clif eagerly.

Ben looked up into his face in a dazed way that showed he did not realize the situation.

After a moment or two Clif repeated the question.

Ben tried to raise himself, but fell back on the grass.

He was dizzy and weak, and it was some little time before he remembered what had happened to him.

Then he shuddered and uttered a frightened cry.

"The snake! The snake!" he palpitated.

"Out of business," replied Clif coolly.

"Out of——"

"Dead."

"Dead?"

"As a coffin nail."

"How——"

"I shot it."

"You shot——"

"Exactly. Through the head. Had I missed——"

Ben stared at him.

"Had I missed," repeated Clif, "I'm afraid I could not have saved you. I never saw but one other serpent like that and it was a dopy looking thing in the Greatest Show on Earth at the Madison Square Garden two years ago. This one was a holy terror to look at in his native wilds. To tell you the truth, old chap, I don't know how you escaped. I wouldn't take a million dollars and run the risk you did."

Ben shuddered again.

"It was awful," he whispered in a weak tone.

"I believe you. I hope we won't meet another. One is enough to frighten a year's growth out of a chap. How did you run foul of it?"

"It was coiled up among the bushes, and I stepped right on it when searching for that bird."

"And then——"

"It was around me before I could get out of its reach. The squeeze it gave me was something I sha'n't forget in a hurry. I could feel my bones almost crack."

"If it had got a hold on one of the trees you'd have understood how it feels to get between the jaws of a closing vise. Your ribs would have folded up like so much paper, and you would have been a fit subject for an undertaker."

"Don't talk about it any more. I'll see that snake in my sleep for a month."

"I wouldn't be surprised. How do you feel now?"

"Pretty good, but awful sore about my chest and arms."

"Are you able to go on a bit?"

"Help me up, and I will make a bluff at it if I can't do any better."

"Take another mouthful of the brandy. It will brace you up."

"Gee! But I feel as weak as a cat," said Ben with a rueful smile as Clif assisted him on his feet and he attempted to walk unaided. "I'll come around all right in a little while."

Clif threw the saddle-bags over his shoulder again and picked up the rifle.

"Where's my helmet?" asked Ben.

"Lord, where are my eyes? I never noticed that you didn't have it on," replied Clif. "I must be getting dopy. I guess your helmet is in the bushes where the dead snake is."

He threw down the bags and the rifle and went to hunt up his friend's headgear.

As he approached the spot where the dead snake lay he heard a great chattering going on.

Not knowing exactly what it meant he advanced with some caution.

When he reached the edge of the spot a comical sight met his view.

Four monkeys—father, mother, and two youngsters, were amusing themselves with Ben's helmet.

The one Clif took for the mother, because it was a little smaller than the largest, had the helmet on her head.

Being much too large for her it hid her head and shoulders from view, and she was making desperate efforts to escape from it.

She was balked in this by the two little ones, who, seemingly impressed by the idea that their parent was lost in the helmet, were searching for her on the outside of it, sitting on top of it and feeling all over it, with such a series

of grimaces and chatterings that Clif couldn't help laughing heartily at the odd sight.

The old chap made no effort to relieve his embarrassed spouse, but sat at one side scratching his tail and grinning like a fiend, as if he were greatly tickled at his wife's dilemma and her frantic contortions to get rid of the helmet.

Finally the female monk got out of the helmet, and seizing the article in both hands flung it in the direction that Clif stood.

He stooped and picked it up.

When he straightened up the four monkeys had retreated to a near-by tree and were making all kinds of grimaces at him.

Clif laughed again and returned to Ben, whom he regaled with the monkey incident.

"It was the funniest thing I ever saw in my life," he said, chuckling at the recollection.

Ben said he wished he had been a spectator also.

He was feeling greatly improved, and so they resumed their way through the jungle.

CHAPTER IX.

IN THE GRIP OF A THUG.

They got on by slow stages during the morning, but Ben gradually improved, and when they stopped to eat some more of the rations in the bag he declared he felt almost as well as ever, barring a soreness of the ribs.

Late in the afternoon they struck a kind of trail through the jungle, and they decided to follow it, though it took them a bit off their course.

"This path may lead us right out of the jungle," said Clif.

"We can't get out any too quick to suit me," replied Ben.

"Or it might guide us straight to the temple Jumna, where the idol is with the great blue stone," suggested Clif. "Do you know, I'm awfully curious to see that stone."

"So am I. It would be great if we could capture it and take it home with us," said Ben with sparkling eyes.

"Not much chance of our doing that, according to Flint's statement of the case."

"Flint be jiggered!" snorted Ben. "It's my opinion that he laid a whole lot of bluff on that yarn. I don't believe he and his crowd were in half the danger he asserted. If it really is a fact that foreigners are not permitted to enter the temple he and his friends would never have got back alive. I'm satisfied that he was joshing us, with the idea of making himself out as some pumpkins."

"That might be so," admitted Clif. "Sailors like to spin tough yarns."

"He's treated us to some hard ones, all right. You remember that one about the old grizzled mariner he said his ship met crossing the Indian Ocean on a hen-coop?"

"Do I? I should smile! He told that yarn as solemnly as if it were gospel truth. I wonder if he really expected us to swallow such a lie?"

"Sure, he did. He said he saw that sailor and that hen-coop as plain as he saw us while he was telling the story. The captain hailed the chap and asked him how long he'd been knocking about on that craft."

"And the fellow replied six weeks," grinned Clif, "at the

same time claiming that he felt as jolly as a sand-boy, whatever that is."

"He refused to be picked up, saying he expected to make the coast of Java in a month. When the captain asked him what he lived on he pointed at three hens in the coop and remarked that he had fresh eggs every morning, at the same time tossing a couple up to the skipper to prove the fact. If Flint can get off such a yarn as that we are justified in taking his story about the risk he and his friends ran in the temple of Jumna with a large grain of salt."

"I guess so. If we run across that temple, I, for one, am going to see the big sapphire eye that winks once a year."

"That's another yarn as bad as Flint's."

"I reckon it is."

The boys followed the trail until they reached a clearing about sundown.

"We'd better camp here for the night," said Clif. "I don't see any chance of our getting out of this jungle before dark."

"I'm willing," agreed Ben.

"You can see it has been used as a camping-ground by somebody, for there are the ashes of several fires."

Clif threw down the saddle-bags in the center of the clearing, and then both he and Ben started to gather a bountiful supply of fuel to make a couple of fires for the purpose of keeping at bay the tigers, hyenas, jackals, leopards, and other beasts that made night vocal with their cries and preyed upon the unwary.

While thus engaged Clif discovered a wild turkey perched on a neighboring tree.

The bird fell a victim to his accurate aim.

"How shall we cook it?" asked Ben. "Roast him on a spit?"

"We haven't any spit. We'll cook it gypsy fashion."

"How is that?"

"Cover it, feathers and all, in a casing of mud. Then dig a hole, fill it with hot embers, placing the bird on top of them, and cover all well with dry earth."

"Who showed you how to cook that way?"

"Nobody. I read about it in a story book."

"Where are you going to get the mud?"

"There's a rivulet of fresh water yonder. We can get all the mud we want there."

"Well, you can boss the job. I'll devote my energies to making a fire and digging the hole," replied Ben.

Clif carried the turkey to the little stream and soon had a thick coating of mud around it.

By that time the fire was burning in fine shape and Ben was just finishing the hole.

In the course of time the dinner was cooked to a turn.

The feathers came off clean, and then an incision in the abdomen got rid of the entrails.

"Gee! This is bang-up," said Ben as he began on a drumstick. "It knocks spots out of some turkeys I've eaten at home. Who'd have thought it could be cooked so fine in such primitive style?"

"It takes the gypsies to do things up brown in the cooking line," replied Clif.

"It's a fine thing to know when a fellow goes out camping with a friend or two in the woods."

"It's beginning to get dark. We must replenish the fire and get a second ready to light. I hope they will protect

us against the beasts of prey. You haven't forgotten what we heard last night at the other camping spot."

"Bet your life I haven't. I'm sorry we haven't the cart here. It was as good as a fort."

"I've heard it said that even tigers have a strong objection to venturing too close to a fire. One of us must keep awake at a time to keep the fires going."

Darkness, as usual in tropical countries, came on quite suddenly.

The second fire was lighted, and Clif, after a survey of the fuel remaining, decided to get some more before the wild animals began to get busy.

He started off into the bushes, keeping a sharp eye out for a possible snake.

Hardly had he departed before a dusky form appeared at the opposite edge of the clearing.

Ben had lain down to rest himself, and from all indications he seemed to be asleep.

The dark figure worked around till Ben's back was toward him, then he began crawling out toward the boy.

He made his way so noiselessly across the dry grass that Ben was not cognizant of his stealthy approach.

At last he got quite close to the recumbent boy, who by that time had grown drowsy between the heat of the fires and the climate, added to the fatigue of the day and the rough handling he had received from the boa constrictor.

The intruder listened carefully to Ben's breathing.

Satisfied that the boy was asleep he came closer still till he actually bent over him.

"A white boy and alone in the jungle," he muttered in Hindoostanee. "He will do as well as another to fulfill my vow to Kali."

Those words proclaimed the man to be a thug.

Why he was alone was not apparent.

It was probable that he had friends at no great distance.

To discover a lone white boy in the clearing was a great surprise to him, but as he needed a victim to propitiate the goddess he served in common with his fanatical sect he greeted the stranger's presence with extreme satisfaction.

Indeed, his superstitious mind actually conceived the idea that Kali had herself provided the victim that he might lose no more time in making the sacrifice.

Slowly and cautiously he drew from about his waist the piece of cloth provided for the purpose of strangling his victim.

Ben's posture prevented him from using it as effectively as he wished, so he proceeded to arouse the boy and frighten him with the hiss of a snake.

This procedure was frequently adopted by the thugs as a preliminary to the actual strangulation, which followed almost immediately while the victim was somewhat dazed by being suddenly awakened.

Ben started into wakefulness with more alertness than the thug had bargained for, but he was not to be deterred from his murderous act on that account.

"Hello! Who are you?" demanded Ben, not relishing the wicked look reflected by the fire in the fellow's eyes.

"Look out! Snake! Snake!" cried the thug in Hindoo language.

Ben didn't understand his meaning, but he followed the direction that the rascal pointed.

That was what the thug wanted.

With a swift movement, born of long experience, he whisked the cloth around Ben's neck and drew it tight.

The boy struggled violently, but the villain had him at a disadvantage.

It would have been all up with Ben in a few seconds but for the fact that at that crucial moment Clif issued from the shrubbery with an armful of wood.

He saw the thug bending over his companion and Ben struggling in his grip.

He dropped the wood, drew his revolver and sprang forward.

He fired straight at the black face that looked strange and uncanny in the glow of the fire.

With a cry of agony the thug fell back, writhed for a moment on the grass and then lay still.

CHAPTER X.

CLIF AND BEN MEET WITH AN ADEPT AND GET EVIDENCE OF OCCULT FORCES.

Clif sprang forward as Ben tore the cloth from his neck and gasped for breath.

He looked down at the native.

He was not dead by any means, as the ball had not entered his brain, but had glanced off his thick skull.

"What was he doing to you, Ben?" Clif inquired.

"Trying to choke me with that cloth."

"What! A thug?"

"Gee! That's what he must be," replied Ben. "I was dozing here waiting for you to get back, when I felt a hand on my shoulder. I started up and saw the fellow's villainous countenance peering into mine. I think his eyes were worse than Salambo's, and that's saying a good deal. He said something in his outlandish language and pointed at the grass beyond this fire. When I looked to see what he was getting at he put the cloth around my neck and started to choke me with it. If you hadn't shot him he'd have done me up. Is he dead?"

"No. He's breathing."

"He deserves to be finished. He meant to murder me, all right."

"I'm not sorry I didn't kill him, bad as he is. I'm not anxious to have human blood on my hands."

"Self-defense is the first law of nature, Clif. If we let him get away he may hang around and creep upon us later on. He's like a snake in the grass."

"There's a strap in that bag. We'll tie his hands behind him," said Clif.

"You'd better lose no time doing it, then," said Ben.

Clif at once tied the thug's arms securely and left him just outside one of the fires.

Then they drew lots to see who would watch first.

That duty fell to Ben.

Clif had been asleep perhaps thirty minutes when he was awakened by a shriek.

"Good Lord!" he ejaculated. "What was that?"

"Some beast crept up and nabbed the thug," said Ben in a tremor of excitement.

"What! In spite of the fire?"

"Yes."

"Why didn't you shoot?"

"Couldn't if I'd wanted to. I didn't see the animal till

he had the rascal and was dragging him away. Serves the chap right. We're well rid of him."

The air was full of animal cries, and the boys could see glaring eyes circling in the darkness around the edge of the clearing.

Clif seized the rifle and fired directly at a pair of fiery orbs.

A snarling whine followed, then a rush of other animals to the spot, a tussle in the gloom of the jungle, growls, yelps and other hideous sounds, and after that a temporary silence.

"You killed or wounded some beast and the rest of the prowlers have made short work of his body," said Ben. "I'll bet there isn't much left of him now."

The night passed in constant alarm, and the boys were glad when daylight drove the beasts back to their lairs.

After a good breakfast of the remains of the turkey and a drink of water from the stream they proceeded onward, still following the trail.

Once more midday overtook them still in the jungle.

They made a meal off the rest of the provender in the saddle-bags and finished the soda.

They still had a good part of the brandy and one of the soda water bottles filled with water they had taken from the rivulet that morning.

"No use carrying these bags any further," said Clif.

"They're a nuisance. The stuff that's in them is of little value to us."

Accordingly when they moved on again the bags were left hanging on a low branch of a tree for some wandering native to appropriate if he saw fit.

An hour later the boys saw a cave a short distance from the trail.

"Let's go over and see what it looks like inside," suggested Ben.

Clif had no objection.

As they drew near the place the entrance was suddenly filled by a medium-sized old man of dark skin, with a weird and uncanny look.

"Welcome, sa'bs," he said in good English. "I've been expecting you. Enter my habitation, where you may rest and refresh yourselves. It is written that I am to offer hospitality to two young sa'bs lately from America."

Clif looked at Ben in some astonishment and his friend returned his gaze.

How was it possible for this old man to know that they were coming that way; and, more wonderful still, how did he learn that they were fresh from the United States?

They regarded him with awe and some little trepidation.

"Be not alarmed, young sa'bs. I am Feringeea, the Mahatma. I have reached that degree of enlightenment that has placed me on the spiritual plane. What is hidden from those of material mold is as plain to me as the sunlight. Enter and you shall behold much that is not often accorded to mortal eyes."

As if impelled by some power they could not resist the boys followed the adept into the cave.

The Mahatma led the way into an inner cavern of some size, and as soon as Clif and Ben were able to distinguish objects they saw, to their consternation, that the place was peopled by a collection of snakes, birds and a tiger.

"Keep close to me and be not afraid," said the Hindoo.

He took a brass vessel from a stone shelf and sprinkled a portion of its contents about.

He also took down a long staff and placed it across the cavern.

The effect astonished the boys.

The reptiles recoiled from the spot as if in great fear.

The tiger receded to the darkest corner and crouched against the wall.

The birds flew as high as they could go and perched about in various nooks in the rocky walls.

"You are perfectly safe as long as you do not pass across that staff," said the strange man in soft tones. "Be not disturbed by any sights or sounds that may appear to be incomprehensible to you. My power is absolute over all living and inanimate objects. This power I have acquired by a lifetime of self-denial and contemplation."

"You say you were expecting us?" said Clif. "How did you know we were coming this way?"

"By the power I possess. You were brought to the jungle by a man who is a great rascal."

"That isn't any lie," replied Clif in surprise.

"He intended to turn you both over to a society of phansigars, who would have murdered and robbed you,"

"Phansigars!" exclaimed Clif.

"You know them as thugs."

"Ah!" said the boy.

"I saved you."

"You!"

"I sent the tiger you see yonder to scatter the man and his companions."

"Gracious!"

"The saddle-bags and rifle I placed in your way for your sustenance and protection."

Ben gasped and looked at the Mahatma.

"Had you not shot and wounded one of the sacred birds of India you would have come hither unmolested. Had you killed the bird," he continued, looking at Ben, "your death by the serpent would have been certain. As it is you were punished for the sacrilege."

"You seem to know all we've gone through," said Clif.

"I do. You wish further evidence of my power?" asked the adept, fixing the boy with his dark, liquid eyes.

"I don't know," replied Clif hesitatingly.

"At this moment there is an adept talking to your father in his office at Madras," said the Mahatma.

"There is?"

"He is asking him to send you a brief message."

Clif had his doubts about that.

"That message will reach me in a few minutes," said the man solemnly.

Clif and Ben looked at each other in some incredulity.

"I see you doubt it. Be silent and wait."

As the Mahatma spoke he grew rigid and his eyes assumed a stony stare, like one in a trance.

The boys regarded him with growing fear, as the light from the suspended brazier fell upon his dark, set countenance.

They asked themselves what was going to happen, and did not dare break the injunction of the adept to remain silent.

Not a sound broke the stillness of the cavern.

Not even a move from the reptiles, the birds and the tiger, all of whom seemed to be carved in stone.

It was a thrilling moment for the boys, and one they never forgot.

Suddenly the man's features and limbs relaxed.

He was himself again.

"It is coming," he said in solemn tones.

As the boys gazed at him spellbound something white fluttered into his lap.

The Mahatma picked it up and handed it to Clif.

"Open," he said laconically.

Clif obeyed the injunction.

This is what he read in his father's well-known handwriting:

"CONSULATE OFFICE, MADRAS, 3 P. M., July 20.

"MY DEAR BOY: Your mother and I are quite well and eagerly awaiting your return. I write this at the request of a religious enthusiast known in this country as an adept. He says he will see that you get it. It will no doubt be easy for him to send it down the coast to the schooner, as the natives will do anything for these men. Hoping it will come to hand all right, I will close with a God bless you, and the wish for your speedy return.

"Your affectionate father,

"GEORGE HALLIDAY."

Clif uttered a gasp of amazement.

There was no getting away from the fact that this was his father's handwriting.

A brief mental retrospect told him that this day was July 22.

Mechanically he pulled out his watch.

The time indicated, according to his own guess-work setting two nights before as he sat under the cart after the breaking up of Salambo's party by the tiger, was 3:30.

It was probably at least half an hour out of the way, one way or the other.

Here was a note written by his father in his office at Madras two days previous and the distance between the cave and the town was—well, he did not know, but it was more than 100 miles; he could swear to that.

By what kind of hocus pocus had that note come to his hand?

Clearly here seemed proof of the occult powers claimed by the adepts of India.

But the real fact was that this fakir had stolen the note from a messenger who was carrying it to the ship, and learning who the boys were he had been trying to mystify them.

"Are you satisfied?" asked the Mahatma.

Ere Clif could reply a succession of piercing shrieks penetrated the cave from the outside.

CHAPTER XI.

THE RESCUE OF ELISE HOLT.

The screams came from a female in evident distress, and the natural American chivalry of Clif and Ben toward the weaker sex caused them to involuntarily spring to their feet and make a dash for the outside.

In his hurry Ben forgot his rifle.

Clif reached the open air first, and saw a young and lovely white girl struggling in the arms of a powerful Hindoo.

Her cries of distress filled the air, and her unhappy predicament appealed at once to the plucky boy.

Dashing forward he struck the Hindoo a heavy blow in the face that dislodged his turban and caused a part of it to fall over his eyes.

Partly releasing the girl he grasped the cloth to raise it from his eyes so that he could make out who his assailant was, at the same time uttering maledictions in Hindoostanee that Clif did not understand nor care for.

"Save me! Save me!" cried the girl frantically, in English.

Clif gave the native another staggering blow and tore the girl from his grasp.

The Hindoo pulled the cloth from his face and glared at his young aggressor.

He was evidently astonished to see two white boys before him.

That fact, however, did not deter him from seeking to recover the girl, who was now clinging to Clif as hard as she could and begging him to protect her.

"Don't fear, I'll protect you," replied Clif.

The Hindoo drew a long knife from a sheath in his waistband and advanced menacingly on Clif.

"Stand back or I'll shoot you full of holes!" cried Ben, covering the man with his revolver.

The native may not have understood his words, but the pointed weapon was an object lesson he was too prudent to disregard.

He muttered some threatening words and pointed at the girl.

"Take her into the cave, Clif," said Ben. "I'll keep this fellow at bay."

Clif took the hint and carried the girl into the outer cave.

At that moment he heard the crack of Ben's revolver, and a moment after Ben made his appearance.

"What did you do—shoot the man?" asked Clif.

"I chased him away. Where is the fakir?"

"In the inner cave, I suppose. I haven't seen him. Cheer up, miss, I guess you're safe enough now."

The girl gradually stilled her hysterical sobs and finally took her arms from around Clif's neck.

"Thank you, oh, thank you for saving me from that man," she said gratefully.

"Don't mention it. You're welcome. What's your name, miss? And how is it you are out in this jungle?"

"My name is Elise Holt. I am English. My father is consul-general at Bombay. We live on the suburbs of the city. One night a week ago I was in our garden quite alone, looking at the new moon. Two natives came upon me suddenly from behind, and stifling my cries, hurried me to a palanquin outside. I fainted in their arms, and when I came to myself I was being carried through a mountain pass many miles from my home. My screams caused the men to stop and one of them came to me and threatened me with a knife unless I kept quiet. I was terrified by his action and did not dare utter another sound. I recognized him as a servant whom father had discharged a short time before. They carried me all night through the mountains. In the morning they stopped at a hut where I was put in charge of a Hindoo woman. That night I was removed

further into the interior to another dwelling. This continued for four days. Then we remained all night at a house and entered this jungle in the morning. We have been traveling two days in it, resting last night in a clearing where I couldn't sleep on account of the wild beasts that frightened me. Awhile ago when the men were resting I escaped from the palanquin, thinking I could find a place of refuge. Anything was better than the fate designed for me by that man."

"What fate was it?"

"He intended to take me to the temple of Jumna and marry me."

"How did you know that?"

"I heard the man explain his plans to his companion."

"Then you understand the Hindoo language?"

"Almost perfectly," the girl replied.

"You have been some time in India, then?"

"Since I was a little girl. You will take me back to my parents, won't you?" she said pleadingly.

"I'll take you to Madras, where my father is the American consul. That is the best I can do, Miss Holt."

"You are American?"

"Yes."

"What is your name?"

"Clifford Halliday, and this is my friend, Ben Wade."

Ben nodded and the girl smiled at him.

"Your father will return me to Bombay, I am sure," she said.

"He'll see that you get there. My mother is in Madras, too, and you shall remain with us until my father communicates with your folks."

"Thank you. I am very grateful to you, Mr. Halliday. I'll never forget what I owe you, nor how brave you were to attack that big native and take me from him. Oh, I should have died had he taken me to the temple."

"The temple of Jumna is in this jungle, is it?"

"It is."

"How far from here?"

"Five miles."

"Does that path outside lead to it?"

"It does."

"Ben and I thought of going there."

"You must not."

"Why not? We want to see the idol and the great blue stone."

"The Treasure of the Jungle!" she exclaimed with a look of fear. "You would not be permitted to see it. No foreigner is allowed to enter the temple."

"I know several who did it," said Clif.

The girl shook her head.

"No foreigner who may have entered that temple has lived to tell the story."

"That's where you're wrong, Miss Holt. A sailor named Flint, attached to a schooner in the Ceylon pearl fishery trade, was in that temple with three companions. He described the idol and the big blue stone fully to us."

The girl seemed to be incredulous.

"At any rate, you mustn't go there," she said earnestly. Clif and Ben looked greatly disappointed.

Having learned that the temple of Jumna was only five miles away by a beaten track they were more anxious than ever to visit it.

To be told that they must not go there was not at all to their liking.

They were sure that they would never get another chance to visit it.

As for the peril of the undertaking, they were inclined to believe it was much magnified.

How could foreign eyes hurt an old bronze idol?

However, Clif felt that it would not be polite to argue the matter with the fair girl.

As a matter of fact, both he and Ben were greatly struck by her fresh, girlish beauty and engaging ways, and both wished to make a good impression on her.

It needed no great astuteness to see that Elise Holt was particularly attracted to Clif.

He had performed a daring and gallant act in her behalf, and that alone predisposed her in his favor.

His manly ways and good looks had their effect on her, too.

Therefore, before long Ben had to admit that Clif had the pull with the handsome English girl, and he metaphorically threw up the sponge.

Suddenly Clif recollected the adept.

"Go into the inner cave, Ben, and see what the fakir is doing. Look out for the tiger and the snakes."

Ben entered the cavern and was gone but a moment or two.

"He isn't in there," he told Clif.

"He isn't?"

"No, nor his menagerie, either. The cave is empty of living things. There is a supply of rice and fruit laid out in bowls on a rug. Probably it is meant for us, for the old fellow told us it was written we were to enjoy his hospitality."

"As he and his animals couldn't have left the cavern this way without our seeing them go, there must be a back entrance to the place."

"No doubt there is, but I didn't notice it."

"Are you hungry, Miss Holt?" asked Clif politely.

"Yes," she answered with a little rueful smile.

"Then you shall dine with us. Is that brazier alight, Ben?"

"Yes."

"Then we'll go inside and eat. I wouldn't mind a peck myself. We haven't had any fruit since we left the schooner."

"Nor rice, either," said Ben.

The girl looked doubtfully at the entrance to the inner cavern, and hugged close to Clif, as her protector, as Ben led the way inside.

There was a bountiful supply of provisions displayed on the rug.

"The fakir figured on Miss Holt," said Clif, pointing at three small mats placed about the rug, and three bowls of cooked rice in front of each of them.

"The fakir is all to the mustard in my opinion," said Ben approvingly. "I wonder what's in those little stone bottles?"

"Taste it and see," said Clif.

"Some kind of a sweet drink, like light wine," replied Ben, after taking a sup.

The three made a hearty meal on the good things, and while eating Clif told the girl all about their experiences

since leaving the schooner on the afternoon of the third day previous.

Miss Holt shuddered at the story of Ben's narrow escape from the boa constrictor and regarded Clif more admiringly than ever.

It was easy to see that she was already more than half in love with her rescuer.

As for Clif, he was about dead gone on the fair girl himself by this time.

Ben began to realize that he was *de trop*, which is French for being in the way.

However, he couldn't very well efface himself under the circumstances, so he contented himself with putting in a word once in awhile.

Clif wound up his narrative with the remarkable performance of the adept.

"Why, he actually produced a letter from my father to me out of the air," he said. "I guess he must have hypnotized us first and we imagined the letter."

"No," said the girl, "those Mahatmas are gifted with wonderful powers."

"You don't mean that, do you?" cried Clif in surprise.

"I do, for I've seen them do tricks."

"What did you see them do?"

"We had an old and peculiar jar with a crack in it which we left in our London home where my aunt lived. As an evidence of his power, an adept, who enjoyed my father's hospitality one day, agreed to bring that jar to India inside of twenty-four hours."

"Did he do it?" asked Clif incredulously.

"Inside of the stipulated time he seemed to produce that jar in our sitting-room in Bombay," replied the girl with a positive nod of her head.

"Did you see it?"

"I did, and held it in my hands. We all agreed that it was the jar, for the crack was in the right place. But when the man departed the jar vanished and papa said he hypnotized us and that we only imagined we saw the jar."

"We'll take your word for it," said Clif. "Then you think that letter was from my father, and that it came from Madras, 100 or more miles away?"

"You can easily prove it by asking your father on your return if he wrote such a letter."

"That's so," replied Clif. "If he did—well, say, I'll be willing to believe those fakirs can do all they claim."

"Where is the letter?" Elise asked.

"The letter!" ejaculated Clif, scratching his ear. "Blessed if I know. I had it in my hand when we heard you scream outside and then I forgot all about it and rushed to your aid. Look around, Ben, and see if it is on the floor here."

Both boys looked, but the letter was not around.

"It's gone. The fakir must have picked it up and put it somewhere."

They talked together till it grew dark and then Clif said they would remain at the cave until morning, as it wasn't safe to travel through the jungle at night.

"You can sleep in here, Miss Holt, and we'll lie down near the entrance. Ben and I will take turns watching."

As the girl felt tired and sleepy they left her and went into the outer cave.

CHAPTER XII.

WHAT HAPPENED IN THE NIGHT.

Soon after Clif went on watch the wind rose outside in the jungle.

And with the wind came a terrible thunder and lightning storm.

For an hour it raged with a fearful violence.

The thunder seemed to shake the very earth, while the lightning was the brightest the boys had ever seen in their lives.

Ben couldn't sleep in such an uproar, and he sat up during his watch.

Just as the storm seemed to be passing away a terrific thunderbolt struck the outer cave and laid the boys out unconscious on the stony floor.

The bolt came with the tail end of the storm, which passed away toward the coast.

Twenty minutes later several shadowy forms crept to the mouth of the cave.

Entering the place with great caution they soon found the unconscious forms of the two boys.

The leader of the party was the big Hindoo from whom Clif had wrested Elise Holt.

He ordered the boys to be bound hand and foot.

This was quickly done, and they were carried to the back of the cave.

The Hindoo and his companions then went into the inner cave.

In a few moments the place resounded with Elise's cries. "Help! Help! Clifford, save me, oh, save me!"

But Clif, like Ben, was dead to the world for the time being, and neither could help her.

She was dragged shrieking from the cave and forced into the palanquin, where she fainted and was borne away by two natives, the entire party following.

It was close on to daylight when Clif came to his senses.

When he attempted to sit up he found he couldn't.

"Good gracious! I'm bound hard and fast. What's the meaning of it?" he asked himself in no little consternation. "Ben! Ben! Where are you, old fellow?"

He received no reply, for although Ben was stretched close beside him he was still insensible to his surroundings.

"What the deuce can have happened?" continued Clif in a fever of perplexed impatience. "Who could have bound me, and how could it have been done without my becoming aware of the fact?"

From his reflections it was apparent that Clif had no idea that he and his friend had been knocked out by the thunderbolt.

"Can this be some crooked work on the part of the fakir? I hardly think so. He acted very friendly to us. Had he wanted to do us up he had every chance when we first entered the cave. Where can Ben be? Ben! Ben! I say, Ben!"

As before, he received no reply to his shouts.

Then he began shouting for Miss Holt, but the girl didn't appear, as a matter of course.

"There is something decidedly wrong. The last thing I remember we were having a terrible thunderstorm. Now the storm is gone. I must have been insensible for some

time. What made me insensible? That's what I want to know."

Daylight came on quickly once it got started, and then Clif discovered Ben within a couple of feet of him.

His friend was just recovering consciousness.

"Say, you're a hard one to wake up," said Clif. "I see you're in the same fix I'm in—bound hand and foot. I s'pose you haven't any idea how this thing happened."

Ben hardly heard him, so astonished was he on discovering his predicament.

"What in thunder does this mean, Clif?" he asked.

"That's the question I've been asking you," returned Clif.

"Don't you know anything about it?"

"I haven't the faintest idea."

"Why, you're bound, too."

"You bet I am, hard and fast."

"Gee whiz! Something has happened. We've been made prisoners."

"Looks like it, but I haven't seen or heard anything of our captors since I woke up about half an hour ago."

"Do you think it was the fakir who served us this way?"

"No."

"Who, then?"

"Oh, ask me something easy, will you?"

"But somebody did it."

"Sure thing. We couldn't have done it in our sleep."

"How about Miss Holt? Call her and get her to cut us loose."

"Have called her, but she hasn't made her appearance."

"Then I have it," said Ben, as if the mystery had been suddenly solved. "You know the chap who carried her from her home, and from whom you rescued her?"

"I remember he was a big, fierce-looking Hindoo."

"He's been here with some of his friends. He had us tied up this way and then he went into the inner cave, found Miss Holt there, and carried her off again."

"By George! I never thought of that. I believe you've hit the nail on the head," said Clif excitedly.

"With your great head it's a wonder that you didn't think of that right off."

"If she's really gone that rascal has come on us unawares and nabbed her. He has taken her to the temple of Jumna as sure as you're alive."

"Sure, for that's where she told us he was bound for in the first place."

"We must follow and rescue her."

"Sure, but it will be necessary for us to get free first."

"Then let's see what we can do in that line. I have made two or three attempts on my bonds, but they hold as fast as giant cement."

Nothing more was said for a few minutes, during which the boys tried to free themselves.

At last Ben gave a shout of satisfaction.

"I've got one hand free; yes, and the other, too!" he added joyfully. "If my knife is still in my pocket I'll have my legs out of limbo in a minute, and then I'll get you out of your fix."

Ben found his knife all right and a minute later he was hacking at Clif's bonds.

The sharp jackknife made short work of the thongs, and Clif was soon free, too.

"They didn't take my revolver."

"Nor mine, either."

"I don't miss a thing."

"Nor I. They must have been in a great hurry when they failed to clean us out. Wait a minute; I'm going to make sure that Miss Elise is gone."

Clif rushed into the inner cave and soon saw that she was missing.

There was no longer any doubt in his mind as to what had happened to her.

"It won't be well for that rascal if I meet him," gritted the boy. "There's our rifle, which they never touched."

Clif returned to the outer cave and held a council of war with Ben.

"We must start for the temple of Jumna at once," he said.

"I'm with you," agreed Ben.

"Miss Elise must be saved at all hazards."

"That's right, and in revenge for the way she's been treated we must get away with that big blue stone if we get half a chance. I want you to understand that I, for one, am after that idol's eye. If we can bring that to Madras we'll get our names in the papers."

Clif was more interested in the fate of the girl just then than in the prospect of getting possession of the big blue stone.

"I wonder where the fakir went?" he said. "If he were here now he might be able to help us."

"As he isn't here we must help ourselves," replied Ben.

"We'll eat a bite or two and then make a start," said Clif. "We left enough last night to make a respectable breakfast."

The boys re-entered the inner cavern, got away with the remainder of the rice and fruit, and then, there being nothing more to detain them, they left the fakir's cave en route for the temple of Jumna.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE TREASURE OF THE JUNGLE.

The sun was well up above the horizon when the boys spied a small village in the distance.

"We are getting close to the temple," said Clif. "This must be the village that Flint said lay within half a mile of the building."

Ben nodded.

The village was built in a wide cleared spot in the jungle, and looked like the picture they had seen of a similar place.

"We'll have to be cautious now so as not to be seen," said Clif.

They left the beaten track and plunged in among the trees.

Their progress, as a matter of course, became slower, as all sorts of natural obstacles lay in their way, and, besides, they had to keep a sharp lookout for snakes which abounded in the less frequented parts of the jungle.

At length, after half an hour's progress, they came in sight of a curious looking building rising in the very midst of the jungle.

"I believe that's the temple," said Clif in a low tone.

"I'll bet it is," coincided Ben. "There doesn't seem to be a soul about."

"Then this is our chance to get a glimpse of the idol."

"There's the wide open door Flint spoke about," said Ben, pointing.

"I see it. Come on."

They made their way with extreme caution to a point within a few feet of the opening, and then paused to reconnoiter.

Not a sound was to be heard either in the building or around the immediate vicinity.

To all appearances the temple was deserted.

"We couldn't get a better chance than the present," whispered Clif. "Are you game to go in?"

"Bet your life I am," replied Ben sturdily.

"Then follow me, and don't make any more noise than you can help."

Entering the building, which was illuminated by the glow from a swinging brazier, the boys found themselves in the presence of the famous idol of Jumna.

It was a tall, hideous-looking figure made out of dark bronze, with gold trimmings, and ropes of precious stones of every kind.

Diamonds, rubies, amethysts, pearls of large size, and other gems of great value, shone and sparkled with great brilliancy.

In every respect it was exactly as Flint had described it, which proved that the sailor had either seen it, as he claimed, or had got a correct description from some person who had viewed it at close quarters.

A huge blue star, constructed of innumerable small sapphires, covered the pit of its stomach, and in the center of this blazed the Treasure of the Jungle—the big blue stone—which in shape resembled a human eye.

The boys stood transfixed and gazed open-mouthed at a sight few foreigners had ever got a glimpse of.

At that moment a curtain at the end of the temple opposite the door was drawn noiselessly back and the priest of the edifice appeared framed in the opening.

His dark bearded countenance grew ominously forbidding as his eyes lighted on the intruders.

Neither of the boys was aware of his presence.

"Gee!" breathed Ben. "This is something worth coming a long distance to see."

"The big blue stone!" whispered Clif, pointing at the great shining jewel.

As he sprang eagerly forward a puff of greenish smoke suddenly issued from under the gem and enveloped his face.

Its overpowering odor staggered the boy.

He threw up his arms wildly and fell back into the arms of his companion.

The smoke evidently came from some ignited drug which had been blown through a hole in the idol by a hidden helper of the Hindoo priest.

The priest glided forward between the boys and the idol and raised his arm in a threatening manner, at the same time uttering some words in Hindoostanee.

Clif gasped once or twice and then pulled himself together.

The priest spoke again and his manner was so menacing that the boys realized that they were in a tight fix.

Ben picked up the rifle he had dropped to catch Clif and both lads backed toward the door.

Their escape, however, was blocked by the sudden appearance of three natives from the jungle.

Obedying a command from the priest, they flung themselves on the boys and secured them in spite of their struggles, taking the rifle from Ben.

The priest uttered another order and the prisoners were dragged around to a hut at the back of the temple.

Here the boys were bound without ceremony and thrust inside the building, where they were left to meditate over what they were up against.

"Gee! We're in a fix this time for sure," said Ben.

"Looks like it, but we mustn't give up the ship," replied Clif.

"We've seen the idol and the big blue stone, anyway," said Ben in a tone of satisfaction.

"We have, and our curiosity may cost us our lives."

"Will these rascals dare harm two American boys?" asked Ben, who seemed to have an idea that their nationality would protect them.

"I guess it will make no difference whether we're American, English, German, or anything else in the white line, if these people make up their minds to do away with us. You remember Flint said he and his friends only got off by the skin of their teeth, and largely because one of them could speak the lingo, and was able to make terms with the priest."

"What do you imagine they'll do with us?"

"You know as much about it as I do. What worries me most is that it is now out of my power to help Elise Holt, who is probably a prisoner somewhere around here."

"While there's life there's hope," said Ben with a sickly grin. "Those black chaps have our rifle. They might take the idea into their heads to shoot us full of holes."

"I don't think so. They have their own way of doing things."

In about half an hour the boys heard a noise at the door, which opened, admitting two dark-skinned persons.

The one in advance was the priest, the other was Salambo, the shark-charmer.

The door was left open to admit the light.

The priest stood back while Salambo advanced and stood over the prisoners.

"Young sa'bs, much bad fix, eh?" he grinned malevolently. "How get 'way other night when tiger come? P'haps explain."

"Why didn't you kill that tiger, you lobster?" replied Ben. "He might have ate us up."

"Tiger no easy kill. How you got loose dat 'casion?"

"We made friends with the tiger and he let us loose," answered Ben.

"Sa'b tell much big lie," said the shark-charmer with a frown. "Where you been dese two, t'ree day, eh?"

"We've been trying to get out of the jungle," replied Clif.

"Why come here?"

"Because it was on our way," said Clif, who did not consider it necessary to explain their intentions to the old rascal.

"Why walk in temple?"

"To see what was in there."

"You see Great Jumna, s'pose?"

"Yes, we saw it, all right."

"Much sorry for sa'bs."

"You look sorry," replied Clif in a tone of disgust.

"Never see schooner 'gain. Stay here till to-morrow. Then head come off 'fore Great Jumna."

"Do you mean to say that we're going to be killed because we looked at that idol?"

"Dat 'cordin' to law of Great Jumna. No help for it."

"Tell the priest that my father, who is American consul at Madras, will ransom us at any reasonable price."

"No good, sa'b. He no listen."

"Try him."

Salambo turned and said something to the priest, but whether the rascal was really translating Clif's request, or only pretending to do so, the boys had no idea, for his language was Greek to them.

The priest shook his head and stamped his foot angrily.

"Much sorry, sa'b. Must lose head. Salambo see only one chance to save young sa'bs."

"Oh, you see a chance, do you?" replied Clif with interest. "What is it?"

"Me lose pearls me take from sa'b. S'pose you know where put finger on them so me get 'em back, then Salambo do what he can for you on 'quiet. Understandin'?"

The shark-charmer favored Clif with a significant and eager wink.

Clif felt, however, that the rascal was not to be trusted.

"How should I know where those pearls are?" he said. "You had them."

"Then sa'b no found them, eh?"

"Where would I find them?"

"Round place where tiger come."

"Did you lose them there?"

The shark-charmer nodded.

"Sorry I can't tell you where they are," replied Clif.

The shark-charmer got down and began to feel of Clif's body, evidently in search of the bag of pearls.

He struck a protuberance that felt like the article, but it was in an inside pocket, and on account of the cord around the boy's arms he couldn't get at it.

Instantly he yanked out his knife and cut the cord.

As the old rascal started to pull open his jacket the boy wriggled aside and struck the Hindoo in the face a blow that dazed him.

The knife dropped from his hand.

Clif seized it and cut his legs loose.

Then in the confusion he set Ben at liberty.

Ben seized a stool that was in the place and knocked the priest insensible with it, then they both attacked Salambo, and threatening him with his own knife, bound and gagged him with the cloth of the priest's turban.

They then bound and gagged the priest.

Shoving the pair into a corner they covered them with dried vegetable fiber that had done duty as a bed.

"Now to escape if we can," said Clif, starting for the open door.

CHAPTER XIV.

IN WHICH BEN TAKES POSSESSION OF THE BIG BLUE STONE.

Peering out cautiously the boys could not see a soul in sight.

"Looks as if we had a good chance to get off into the

jungle without attracting attention," said Ben. "But before we go we can strip the idol of the jewels and the big blue stone."

"But we came here to save Elise Holt," said Clif.

"I'm afraid we can't do anything for her under the circumstances."

"We must try and do something. Only cowards would desert a woman in distress."

"We don't know that she was brought here," objected Ben. "We can't afford to monkey around on a chance and lose our lives. I'm going into the temple."

Without waiting for his companion to offer any objection he crossed the open space to the back door of the Hindoo building and disappeared inside.

Clif was obliged to follow.

Entering the temple he found himself in a small room, with a couch, sundry other articles, and a ladder in one corner leading to the conical roof above.

Ben was not there.

Walking over to the curtain which divided the room from the idol apartment he looked in and saw Ben removing the big rope of diamonds and other precious stones from the shoulders of the statue.

Instead of joining him something impelled him to run up the ladder and see what was above.

Tiny slits in the roof flooded the loft with sunshine.

His roving eyes lighted on a crouching female figure in one corner.

"Elise—Miss Holt!" cried Clif joyfully.

"Clifford!" she ejaculated, with a scream of delight.

He rushed over to her.

She tried to raise her arms to him, but could not, for they were bound to a ring in a post.

"You have come to save me?" she said, eagerly.

"I have," he replied, as he cut her loose with the shark-charmer's knife, which he carried in his hand.

"You are a brave, noble boy!" she cried, impulsively throwing her arms around his neck.

"Come! We have no time to lose," he said. "We were captured ourselves, and only escaped by accident. We are in great danger of our lives, but whatever happens, you can rely on me, Elise. I will save you, or die fighting in your behalf."

Clif was about to lead her down the stairs when they heard a noise below.

"Clif! Where are you?" came Ben's voice.

"Here I am, old fellow! I've found Miss Holt. We'll be right down."

"Don't stir, on your life!" came back from Ben. "I'm coming up there!"

In another moment he came scrambling up the ladder.

"Glad to see you, Miss Holt," he said. "Silence is the word now, for there's a crowd of natives coming this way from the village."

Then, with a grin of satisfaction, he held up his rifle in one hand and in the other the big blue stone, the Treasure of the Jungle, while one of his pockets bulged with the jeweled rope.

Elise uttered a gasp of terror.

"You have robbed the idol of Jumna," she quivered. "We will never escape from here alive. Even if we could get away in safety, we should be followed to the world's

end by Hindoos sworn to recover that stone or lose their lives in the attempt. The search for that stone would never be given up, if it took more years than the natural span of our lives. Foolish boy! You must put it back!"

Elise shuddered, and clung tremblingly to Clif.

Looking through the slits in the roof, the beleaguered three saw perhaps a hundred natives approaching the temple from the direction of the village.

They gathered around the building in a circle, one old, white-haired Hindoo alone advancing to the back door of the temple.

He called to the priest, but, of course, received no answer from that person, as the reader knows he was in the hut behind, bound hand and foot, as well as unconscious.

After calling on the priest several times, without success, the old man ventured into the room where the protector of the temple lived.

Seeing that the priest was not there, he rejoined the villagers.

At a sign from him they all squatted down and began a solemn chant to Jumna.

A period of silence followed, during which the white-haired man looked anxiously around for the priest.

"I wonder how long they intend to stay?" asked Ben, impatiently.

"They are waiting for the priest," said Elise. "It is funny he should be away from here. He is not supposed to leave the temple at all."

"He's not very far away," grinned Ben.

Then Clif told her how they had been captured while looking at the idol; how they had been bound hand and foot, and left in the hut yonder, and how they had been visited by the priest and the rascally shark-charmer, with the result the reader knows.

"Then the priest is at this moment a prisoner in that hut?" said Elise, regarding the nerve of the boys as something wonderful.

"That's where he is," replied Ben, "and where he's likely to remain, unless some of these chaps look in there and release him."

Hardly were the words out of his mouth before there was a sudden commotion among the natives.

Looking to see the cause, the three young people saw Salambo dragging the senseless form of the priest out of the hut.

CHAPTER XV.

ENCOMPASSED BY PERIL.

Salambo held up the helpless form of the priest and spoke excitedly to the white-haired old chap.

He, in turn, addressed the natives in a quick and authoritative way.

In a few minutes the entire assemblage scattered through the jungle, a dozen or so taking the path back in the direction of the Mahatma's cave.

"The fat is in the fire now," said Ben. "Those fellows have gone in search of us. Somebody is bound to come up here to look after you, Miss Holt, and then Clif and I will be discovered. However, they won't get us without a fight. This rifle and our revolvers will keep them at bay a while. Can you use a pistol, Miss Holt?"

"I can."

"Not afraid to shoot to save your life, eh?"

"I have fired a revolver more than a hundred times."

"Good! Take mine, then. I'll use the rifle," said Ben.

"I forgot to ask you how and by whom you were carried off from the cave last night," said Clif. "We woke up this morning to find ourselves helpless, and bound hand and foot. At first we could not understand how you could have been taken away without our knowing about it, but we have since remembered that the cave was struck by a lightning bolt which knocked us unconscious. We were undoubtedly in that state when the cave was visited by those who took you away. We figured it out that the man who kidnapped you from your home was at the bottom of the matter."

"Yes, he was. His name is Sahib Khan. He brought me here, and wanted the priest to marry me to him at once. When I told the priest who my father was, and all the circumstances of the case, he told Sahib Khan that he could not solemnize the marriage until after he had consulted Great Jumna as to the advisability of it. He told Sahib Khan that he would take me temporarily under his protection, and guaranteed that I should not escape in the meanwhile."

While they were talking, in guarded tones, Salambo and the white-haired old man succeeded in restoring the priest to his senses.

The three held a brief conversation together, then Salambo started off down the trail, while the white-haired man went toward the village.

"I wonder what this is for?" said Ben, laying hold of a rope that ran up through the loft from a corner of the idol room to the roof.

He discovered that it was attached to a bell.

"I'll bet it's an alarm bell," he said, after a moment's thought.

"Better cut it, then," said Clif.

Ben did so, and made a huge knot in the severed end, so that it would still hang the same as usual.

The priest entered the room below, and they heard him moving around there for a while.

Then he went into the idol room.

In a moment he discovered the desecration of the idol.

He was simply frantic.

He seized the bell-rope and pulled it vigorously, but the bell did not ring out.

With a malediction he sprang up the ladder to see what the cause was, and came face to face with the three young people.

He also found himself covered by the rifle and the two revolvers.

"Order him up the rest of the way, Elise," said Clif.

The girl addressed the priest in his own language.

He hesitated to obey, but finding that he had no show against the trio, reluctantly complied with the mandate.

Ben and Clif then bound and gagged him so that he was helpless.

It was now after midday, and the boys began to realize that they were hungry, a sensation that Elise also participated in.

"I'll go downstairs and forage about," said Clif, "while there's no one in sight."

Elise begged him, with much anxiety, to be careful of himself for her sake, and he promised that he would.

He didn't have to go further than the room below, where he found a bountiful supply of rice and fruits, which he brought upstairs to his companions.

They made a good meal, which they washed down with a cordial prepared by the priest himself for his own use.

"The question is, how are we going to get away?" said Clif. "We can't start out in broad daylight, for the jungle is full of the natives, looking for us."

"If we sneak after dark the jungle will be alive with animals, ready to pounce on us," said Ben, dubiously.

"If we can start just as soon as darkness sets in, keep to the beaten track as far as the cave, five miles away, we may escape the beasts. They don't really get about much before a couple of hours or more after sunset," said Clif.

"We'll have to chance it anyhow, for we couldn't very well remain here undiscovered for very many hours. The priest will be missed again, and a search will be made for him. Some of the searchers might come up here, and then our name would be Tim Flynn beyond any doubt."

Nothing happened to alarm them until close on to sundown, when Salambo and a party of natives appeared.

The shark-charmer stood outside the back door and called the priest.

Naturally, he received no answer.

Finally he came back and sat down to wait.

He was not a very good waiter, and he decided to look into the temple building, though this was against the regulations.

He chased the natives around front before he attempted it.

Then he entered the back room.

Not finding the priest, he ventured to ascend to the loft.

As his head rose above the floor he saw the girl first, then the priest, lying bound and gagged, in the corner.

He rushed up to release him, and then found himself confronted by Clif and Ben with drawn revolvers.

"Utter a sound, and you're a dead shark-charmer!" said Clif sternly, pressing the cold muzzle of his revolver against the old rascal's temple.

The fellow was an arrant coward at heart, and he collapsed.

He was bound, gagged, and placed beside the priest.

As the sun set, the young people ate some more of the fruit and finished the rice.

"We will start as soon as night sets in to cover our movements," said Clif.

In half an hour it was dark enough for their purpose, and they were on the point of starting when more natives turned up and called for the priest.

This crowd cut off their retreat from the rear.

"Now what are we going to do?" asked Ben, in a nervous voice.

CHAPTER XVI.

CONCLUSION.

Salambo's party in front came around and joined the latest arrivals, and a powwow took place between them.

"The natives all seem to be at the back now," said Clif. "We'll try and make our way out through the idol room."

Led by Clif, they descended to the room below, which was as dark as pitch.

Clif and Elise were passing the curtain that divided the two rooms, when Ben encountered a creeping object, which proved to be a native who had ventured into the priest's living-room.

Knowing he had no right to be there, the native let out a yell and fled into the night.

That startled both the natives outside and the three young people.

"Come on! We have no time to lose!" whispered Clif, hastily forcing the girl toward the front door. "Where are you, Ben?"

"Here I am! I ran against one of those natives, who was crawling about the room in the dark," he said.

"Hold your weapons handy for instant use," warned Clif as they issued into the jungle.

At that moment they heard the voice of Salambo shouting.

He had managed to get rid of his gag, and was taking instant advantage of it.

"He's calling for help," said Elise. "Let us run!"

Clearly they had not a moment to lose, and they hurried along as fast as they could go toward the trail.

They were still struggling along in their efforts to find the beaten track when a great hubbub filled the air around the temple.

"They've found Salambo and the priest, I'll bet," said Ben. "We'll be in for it hot and heavy in a few minutes."

In a few minutes, to their great satisfaction, they hit the road to the cave, and started for it on a jog trot.

It wasn't long before they were aware that the natives were in pursuit.

There was little doubt that they would be soon overhauled.

"There's only one chance now for us," said Clif. "Something must be done to distract their attention. Give me your rifle and cartridge belt, Ben, and take my revolver."

The exchange was quickly made.

"Now run along with Elise, and I will cover your retreat," Clif said.

"No, no!" cried the girl, throwing her arms around his neck. "You must not stay behind!"

Elise clung to Clif hysterically until he was obliged to tear her arms from his neck.

Then he disappeared in the darkness, and presently the crack of his rifle was heard a hundred feet back, mingled with the scream of a badly wounded Hindoo.

Ben, understanding the wisdom of his friend's purpose, grabbed the weeping Elise and rushed her down the trail in the gloom.

The pursuit was checked by Clif's shot, and the Hindoos, led by Salambo, quickly surrounded the big tree where the plucky boy had taken refuge, believing they had cut off the three fugitives.

As the natives closed in, Clif kept up a continuous fire as he perceived their white turbans moving in the jungle.

Every shot brought down a Hindoo, and they grew cautious and held aloof.

In the silence that succeeded Clif slipped away from the tree and crawled into the jungle, as silently as an Indian on the war-path.

He had scarcely got a dozen feet from the tree when he ran against a creeping native, advancing with great caution.

The fellow uttered a yell and grabbed the boy.

Clif used his rifle.

The Hindoo let out another yell, and released his hold of the boy.

Clif glided away in the darkness as the man's companions came rushing to the spot where he lay wounded, and making the jungle hideous with his cries of pain.

The young American reached the beaten path again and sped down it like a runner trying for a record.

Gradually he left the pursuers behind, for Salambo and his crowd, believing they had the fugitives almost in their grasp, remained in the vicinity of the tree where Clif had done the shooting, beating the brush in every direction.

In the meantime the priest, who had remained behind at the temple, succeeded in reaching the upper end of the severed bell-rope, and the fugitives could hear the clang, clang of the bell raising the echoes of the jungle.

Ben urged the disconsolate girl on faster.

"They have caught and perhaps murdered him," she quivered, as she permitted herself to be forced onward. "I don't care if I die now! I don't want to live if he is dead!" she sobbed.

"I don't believe they've caught him," said Ben, reassuringly, though he had his doubts ever since the rapid crack of the rifle had ceased.

"If they haven't, they will. They are sure to do so, there are so many of them; and the treatment of the priest cries aloud to them for vengeance."

"Well, we'll hope for the best. Clif's life will cost them dear, in any case," said Ben.

At length they came in sight of the Mahatma's cave, and made a quick dash for it.

Ben led Elise into the rear cavern, and then they sat down to rest and await the appearance of Clif, if he was so fortunate as to escape from their enemies.

Thus twenty minutes of anxious suspense to Ben and Elise passed.

Ben had gone to the main entrance to watch, when he saw a dark figure rushing toward the cave.

With drawn revolver he awaited the approach of the person, hoping it might be Clif, but fearing that it wasn't.

At length the figure eased up, stopped, and appeared to listen; then approached the cave more leisurely.

Ben's heart beat fast.

"I believe it is Clif!" he said, excitedly.

In a few moments there was no doubt of the fact.

Ben rushed forward and gripped him by the hand.

"Glory! but I'm glad to see you, old man! I was afraid you were done for. Elise is all broke up about you. She's in the inner cave. Go in and comfort her."

Clif ran inside, calling to the girl.

With a scream of joy she flew to his arms, and they were soon locked in a close embrace.

"Oh, Clif! Clif! I thought——"

"Never mind what you thought, dearest. I got away from the crowd, though not without doing up several of them, and here I am, safe and sound."

"I'm so happy!" she cried, nestling close to him in her joy and contentment.

We will not dwell on what passed between them during the next few minutes, but they were soon interrupted by the appearance of Ben.

"The natives are coming toward the cave! There's a big mob of them. Let's see if there isn't a rear exit from this place. There must have been a way for the fakir to leave, for he got away yesterday without our seeing how he did it," said Ben.

Accordingly they made for the back of the inner cavern, and soon found a tortuous passage that led to the outer air.

Climbing a big tree, they awaited the next move on the part of the natives.

At that moment they saw lights approaching in the distance, from the direction they had originally come.

Three wagons, full of native constabulary, drawn by stout horses, came dashing up the beaten way.

In the front wagon were Captain Glaze and William Flint.

Clif recognized their faces in the light of the flaring flambeaux, and gave a shout of joy.

"There's the captain and Flint!" he cried to Ben. "Fire your revolver, and yell as hard as you can!"

Some of the natives issuing from the rear entrance to the cave rushed toward the tree on hearing the noise.

Clif, Ben and Elise opened fire on them at once.

The wagons stopped, the constables alighted, and soon a big melee was on, during the progress of which the boys and Elise ran up to Captain Glaze and Flint.

"What in thunder brought you boys away out here in the jungle?" cried Captain Glaze. "And who is this young lady with you?"

"We'll tell you everything when we're out of danger," replied Clif.

In a few minutes the constables had put the natives to flight, and then the captain's party, with the rescued boys and Miss Holt, began to retrace their way.

They camped for the night at the first clearing they came to, and there Clif told the captain and Flint all about their adventures since leaving the schooner that afternoon for what they supposed would be a brief trip to the shore.

Needless to say, Captain Glaze, and Flint, as well, were amazed at what they had gone through.

"You'll have to give up that big blue stone and that rope of gems," he said to Ben. "We'll be surrounded before morning and a demand will be made on us for them. You've foolishly committed a great sacrilege in Hindoo eyes."

Ben kicked against this, however.

Then the captain held a consultation with the leader of the constables.

The result was camp was broken at once, and the journey through the jungle continued.

After that the trip was pushed toward the coast by a

short route known to the constables, and the party finally reached the shore.

The captain then hurried the boys and the girl aboard the schooner, got up anchor, and started at once for Madras, where they arrived the next day.

We will not dwell on the astonishment of Mr. and Mrs. Halliday on hearing about their son's and his friend's astonishing adventures in the Indian jungle.

The consul shook his head when Ben produced the big blue stone and the rope of jewels.

"They must be returned," he said. "You never would reach America alive with them in your possession. You'd be dogged from the moment you left the protection of the consulate by Hindoos, whose one mission would be to recover those gems."

The truth of the consul's words were shown that afternoon, when the priest of the Jumna temple appeared and demanded the return of the big blue stone and gems.

Ben reluctantly gave them up.

Then Clif showed the priest the yellow pearl.

The man's eyes glistened when he saw what a fine specimen it was, and he offered Clif a large sum of money for it.

Clif held out for more, and got it.

Altogether he received \$5,000 for the silver pearl and the gold one.

Of this sum he gave Ben \$500.

Mr. Halliday sent word to the consulate office at Bombay that Elise was safe at his home in Madras, having been rescued from her abductor by his son.

The next steamer brought the girl's father to Madras.

He could not thank Clif enough for saving his child.

The parting between Elise and Clif was a tearful one, but each swore eternal constancy to the other.

A few weeks later Clif and Ben, returning to New York, were the guests of Mr. Holt for ten days at his elegant villa in Bombay.

Clif asked the Englishman for his daughter's hand after his four years' college course had been finished, and Mr. Holt consented to their engagement.

In due time Elise and Clif were married, in London, with Ben as best man, and the newspapers not only chronicled their marriage, but gave much space to a description of their romantic meeting in the Indian jungle when the bridegroom and his friend were after the big blue stone.

THE END

Read "LITTLE JAY PERKINS, THE BROKER; OR, SHEARING THE WALL STREET LAMBS," which will be the next number (152) of "Fame and Fortune Weekly."

SPECIAL NOTICE: All back numbers of this weekly are always in print. If you cannot obtain them from any newsdealer, send the price in money or postage stamps by mail to FRANK TOUSEY, PUBLISHER, 24 UNION SQUARE, NEW YORK, and you will receive the copies you order by return mail.

Fame and Fortune Weekly

NEW YORK, AUGUST 21, 1908.

Terms to Subscribers.

Single Copies.....	.05 Cents
One Copy Three Months.....	.65 "
One Copy Six Months.....	\$1.25
One Copy One Year.....	2.50

Postage Free.

HOW TO SEND MONEY.

At our risk send P. O. Money Order, Check, or Registered Letter; remittances in any other way are at your risk. We accept Postage Stamps the same as cash. When sending silver wrap the coin in a separate piece of paper to avoid cutting the envelope. Write your name and address plainly. Address letters to

Frank Tousey, Publisher, 24 Union Sq., New York.

GOOD STORIES.

A cannon of the Revolutionary War has been discovered buried on the farm of Ephraim Kauffman, near Warwick, Chester County. The cannon weighs 4,550 pounds and is of cast-iron. The letters "P. W. F." cut on it are taken to mean that it was made at the Pennsylvania Warwick Furnace, which was operated during the Revolution.

It is not known just how long mosquitoes can live, but their average life is much longer than is ordinarily supposed. Thousands of them live through winter, hibernating or asleep in dark places in barns or house cellars. In sparsely settled localities, where they cannot find such places for shelter, they live through the winter in hollow trees; and, even though the temperature may fall far below freezing, they are not winter-killed, but on the approach of warm weather become active again. Mosquitoes are frequently seen flying about in the woods before the snow has left the ground.

The German Emperor is particularly fond of thrush salmi, a kind of stew made of thrushes. Queen Wilhelmina of Holland prefers roast joints, and the King of Spain likes underdone beef. Custards are the favorites of the King of Italy, while cod fried in oil finds favor with the Czar of Russia, and mutton is chosen by the President of the French Republic. The grandfather of the King of Italy had a peculiar taste for a monarch—he preferred bread and cheese, and used to carry it about with him, even to the opera. King Edward of England has a special liking for well-cooked mutton chops.

The opening of the fishing season in Minnesota has revealed a condition of things almost unparalleled in the annals of this favorite sport. It has been known to fishermen for some time that there was an abundant supply of fish in the lakes and creeks, and that the finest sport could be expected. Since the season opened every train from St. Paul has been crowded with fishermen, and from every fishing ground in the State reports are arriving that the fish are running through the creeks connecting the various lakes in such shoals that at times it is difficult to cross the creeks without stepping on them. At Fergus Falls, a favorite fishing place, the banks of the creeks are lined with spectators, who stand and watch the fishermen pick out the largest and best fish with their hands as they swim past. The law permits the spearing of pickerel, suckers and a variety known here as red horse. At one point a fisherman took out sixty fish in record time, the largest being a pickerel weighing twenty-six pounds. Witnesses describe the fish as swimming so thickly that a boy, armed with a spear for the first time, could have no difficulty in taking out a wagon load.

Hand-manufactured rugs and carpets of silk, sheep's and camel's wool, yak hair, jute, hemp and felt, according to a

contributor to "Harper's," are largely manufactured in China, and especially in Tientsin and Peking. The industry has recently been introduced in several schools for the employment of the poor. The silk carpets are very like those produced in India, Turkey or Persia, in colors and quality of material, but vastly different in design if left to Chinese selection. Foreign designs, if furnished, are faithfully copied. These rugs differ greatly in quality. In some the warp is cotton, while in others the warp, as well as the nap or woof, is silk. Some are made of even surface, while in others the figures are raised. The quality also differs in the number of warp threads used to the inch, which vary from 12 to 20. The cheapest are sold at from \$1.30 to \$1.50, Mexican, per square foot, while the better qualities readily bring from \$2 to \$5 per square foot. They are made in all sizes, and are made for floor, table and piano covers and wall draperies. The wool rugs are in far greater demand and are largely used throughout China, Japan and the East. Many are exported to Europe, and lately to America. They are made on the same loom and in the same manner as are the silk rugs. Those of all sheep's wool, with cotton warp, range in price from 40 cents to \$2.50, Mexican, per square foot, the size, design and color to suit the taste of the purchaser. The wearing qualities of these carpets make them a very economical floor covering, and age softens and blends the colors, which are, in all reliable places of manufacture, of vegetable dyes. The rugs made from the other materials mentioned (the yak excepted) are used only by the natives, and range in price from 5 to 25 cents per square foot. Those made from the hair of the yak are very rare and expensive, comparing in style and beauty with the finest silk rugs. They are made only in the interior.

JOKES AND JESTS.

"How long can a man go without air?" "I do not know. The longest Pullman trip I ever took occupied seven days."

"A man told me the other day that I looked like you." "Where is he? I would like to punch him." "I killed him."

"Don't I give you all the money you need?" her husband complained. "Yes," she replied; "but you told me, before we were married, that you would give me all I wanted."

"Now, Timmy," said Pat Clancy to his youngest, "I've brought yez another ball-bat. If yez lose it as ye hov the other three, Oi'll take an' break it over yer head. Now moind!"

Mistress—Jane, I saw the milkman kiss you this morning. In future I will take the milk in. Jane—"Twouldn't be no use, mum. He's promised never to kiss anybody but me.

Gayman (in front of the mirror)—I don't know whether to wear a white necktie or a black one this evening. What is good form for a man over sixty? Mrs. Gayman—Chloroform.

An old Georgia negro, having told the judge that he had "been in three wars," was asked to name them, when he replied: "I wuz a cook in de Confedrit war, and atter freedom broke out I was married two times."

Cholly—Charming widow, isn't she? They say she is to marry again. Algy—I wouldn't want to be a widow's second husband. Cholly—Well, I'd rather be a widow's second husband than her first husband, doncherknow.

"It's too bad," remarked Popley, thoughtfully, "that babies are not born with some knowledge of arithmetic." "What are you driving at?" asked his friend. "I'm told that if one afflicted with sleeplessness will begin to count at one and count upward he'll soon put himself to sleep."

The Idiot Witness

By Alexander Armstrong.

"Guilty!"

A pin could have been heard to drop, such was the silence before that one word fell solemnly from the lips of the foreman of the jury.

And after its utterance a murmur went through the crowded room.

"Maurice Redmon, stand up!" said the judge.

With an effort the prisoner struggled to his feet and confronted his fate.

"Maurice Redmon, you have been tried by a jury of your peers, and found guilty of murder. What have you to say why the sentence of the court should not be pronounced upon you?"

"I can only say that I am innocent."

"Guilty of murder in the first degree!"

This was the verdict of the jury in the case of the people versus Redmon. As there was no hanging for crime in the State, Maurice Redmon was sentenced to the penitentiary for life, at hard labor.

I watched the crowd surging from the court-room, and noticed the fact that people seemed generally satisfied at the verdict.

"He was a fiend incarnate!"

"A just verdict."

"Only such a fiend ought to hang."

"My friends, aren't you a little too fast? I believe Maurice Redmon is innocent."

Thus spoke a large man with a handsome face and dress of a well-to-do citizen.

So one man at least in the crowd did not recognize the verdict as a just one. As for myself, I was in doubt. I had heard most of the evidence, and it bore strongly against the accused. Nevertheless, in my mind there lurked a doubt.

I was on a visit to a friend in Northern Michigan, and the trial of Maurice Redmon had already begun when I arrived. My friend, George Martin, was a firm believer in the guilt of the condemned man, as were the large majority of the community.

Redmon had murdered his wife. Poison—arsenic—was the weapon used, and after ten days of agony the young wife died. This happened two months before my coming to Whitewood, and during these long weeks Redmon had lain in the county jail.

Well, it was over now, and I walked home with George Martin. He had a cozy cottage home, with a wife and two children.

While George was free to denounce Redmon, his wife defended him, and refused to believe in his guilt.

"It's a shame!" she exclaimed, when she heard the verdict. "Maurice Redmon goes to Jackson prison an innocent man."

"Nonsense!" said George.

"It isn't nonsense. I have been in their home many times, George, and know it was a happy one. Maurice loved his wife dearly, and would have sooner taken his own life than harmed a hair of Lucy's head."

"There cannot be the least doubt of Redmon's guilt, Carrie," he said. "You forget that Redmon's mother lived with them, and if I remember rightly, she did not approve of her son wedding Lucy Stone two years ago. Undoubtedly she was at the bottom of the trouble, and mayhap was an accomplice in her son's crime."

"George!"

"Nevertheless I am fain to believe so," asserted George Martin, unheeding the rebuking look on his wife's face.

"Mr. Sharp, what is your opinion?"

Carrie Martin turned upon me as though she would find some one to stand with her in defence of the lately condemned man.

Up to this time I had not expressed myself. "I confess that I am in doubt," was my instant reply.

"And all doubts should be given to the prisoner—is it not so?"

"I believe it is."

"Then, had you been a member of the jury, you would have voted not guilty?"

I bowed acquiescence.

George Martin regarded me with surprise.

"It is not too late yet," cried Carrie Martin, in eager, hopeful tones. "Oh, sir! will you not investigate this case, and if you find Maurice Redmon innocent rescue him from prison?"

The blue eyes of Carrie Martin looked pleadingly into my face. She knew that I was a detective, and rather a successful one, and this accounted for her pleading words.

"I will look into the affair," I said slowly.

"May heaven help you!" fervently ejaculated Carrie Martin.

As I turned to go, George Martin laid his hand on my arm.

"Old boy, this is nonsense."

"George, I am in earnest. I shall look into this affair. Very likely the man condemned to-day is guilty, yet should it be otherwise, and I permit him to go to prison for life while a doubt remained in my mind, I should feel guilty indeed."

I left the house and sauntered down the village street. Soon I passed beyond the limits of the town and found myself upon a country road.

This I followed for nearly a mile; then, noticing a path leading into a little gulley, I turned upon it. I wished to find a secluded spot, free from observation, where I could meditate and form a plan of action.

Passing into a little shaded gulch, I was delighted to find a spring of pure water bubbling from under the bank. Slaking my thirst, I sat down upon a smooth stone, and was soon lost in deep reflection. I was not to remain long thus, however. The rattle of wheels roused me. I started to my feet, and found that I could see the road, my eyes being on a level with the bank. The bushes were open, and I saw a two-wheeled vehicle rattle along behind a single horse. I recognized it as Dr. Burden's gig.

He had been a most important witness for the prosecution during the trial just concluded, and was now returning to his home in a neighboring village.

I had some curiosity to gratify, and resolved to go out to the road and meet the doctor. I had taken one step when I halted suddenly. A loud laugh filled my ears, sounding like the cackle of a dozen barnyard fowls.

"Morning, doctor! Been out to see the sick folks, eh?"

And then I caught sight of a bareheaded man, shuffling out to intercept the doctor.

A queer-looking specimen he was. Short, and stoop-shouldered, with an old, wrinkled face, bare as a boy's, a mass of unkempt hair falling about his ears, eyes and brow. A long, loose coat fell nearly to the queer man's heels.

"Hello, Sam! What are you doing here?" cried Dr. Burden, as he halted his horse and bent toward the queer specimen of humanity who had just stepped from the bushes.

"Hidin'."

"Hiding? Who from?"

"From the officers. I knew they'd arrest me if young Redmon got clear."

The man looked about him sharply, and I saw a wild look on his face that was plainly revealed even at the distance of several rods.

"Well, you've no call to be afraid now," said the doctor, reassuringly.

"Have they 'victed him?"

"Yes."

"Ho! Then I'm all right."

Dr. Burden emitted a pleased laugh, cracked his whip, and drove on.

I stood still, watching the queer creature in the road. He leaped and danced about for joy, and laughed immoderately.

"Ho! Simple Sam ain't such a fool after all. He got the money, and Redmon goes to prison. Nobody'll ever know—nobody'll ever know."

Then the old man who had called himself Simple Sam hobbled back into the bushes. I watched him narrowly. He made

his way down into the gulch, and sat down, not ten feet from my position. When he caught sight of me he started to his feet and emitted a cackling laugh. Then he said:

"Who are you?"

"I'm the friend of the innocent. Who are you?"

"I'm Idiot Sam—Simple Sam, the fool. Ho! ho! But I was smart enough for all of 'em. Yes, I was."

"Of course," I said. "People are deceived when they imagine you are foolish. You are a wise man, one of the wisest in the States."

"Eh? So you've found me out? Well, wouldn't them big guns have opened their eyes ef I'd been put on the stand? Ho! I'd make a splendid witness, wouldn't I?"

"Why not?"

"Sure enough. Why not? I thought that way myself. I could 'a' told 'em that he was innocent. He'll go to prison, and Luke'll have his revenge."

"Luke?"

"Luke Pardy. Folks haven't seen him round here, but he was here all the same."

"Of course he was," I answered, humoring the simple-minded fellow. He might know something, and he might not. There could be no harm in questioning him, at all events.

"He was; and he fixed her."

"Mrs. Redmon?"

"Eh? Did I say so?"

The man drew back and suddenly seemed to fear he had been talking too much. The idiot was not such a fool as people imagined.

"No; but I know how it was. Lucy Redmon was Simple Sam's friend."

"She was."

"And you betrayed her."

"No. Luke Pardy was the man."

"Yes. He gave the poison——"

"No, he didn't. Fooled again. 'Twas in the cup—in the cup he brought from India. Do you want to see it? The sick woman dranked once out of it, then died."

"I would like to see the cup."

"I've got it. I stole it from the room the night she died. Was it wrong? Guess you won't think so. Others might 'a' been poisoned. The folks, jury an' all, thought Maurice destroyed the cup so't nobody should see the poison. He didn't. They were all fools. I've got the cup now."

Then Idiot Sam began fumbling in his long coat, and soon produced a small china cup, with a pretty vine running about the rim.

"Pretty cup, eh?"

"Very pretty," I said, taking it from his hand.

Stooping suddenly over the spring, I filled the cup to overflowing, and, raising it to my lips, said:

"Here's health to Sam, the wisest man in Whitewood."

Instantly the idiot seized my hand, his short frame shaking as though in an ague fit.

"No, no! You mustn't! One is enough!"

"What's the trouble now?" I said, as I lowered the cup.

"Poison!"

"The liquid? Nonsense! This is pure cold water——"

"But the cup is poisoned!"

He attempted to take it from my hand, but I held it fast. "Tell me all about it, Sam," I said in a determined voice.

"He'll be mad if I do."

"Luke Pardy?"

"Yes."

"I'll stand between you and him."

"Honest, now?"

"I swear it."

But the idiot uttered one of his cackling laughs, and refused to speak more. When I refused to give up the cup, Simple Sam became very angry.

"He'll kill me if I don't return it. He said he would."

"Where is he?"

"Not far away. He went to the trial. He's Mr. Brown now. I'm sorry I did what he wanted me to, for Lucy Redmon was always kind to Simple Sam. I didn't know the cup was poi-

soned, but after I stole it I gave a dog water from it, and he died. I saw Lucy drink, and she died, so I know."

"Her husband is innocent, Sam. Do you wish to see him suffer—to lay in prison for life for a crime that another committed?"

"I don't want to go to prison in his place."

"And this is why you remained quiet?"

"Yes."

"See here! When you smuggled this cup into the sick-room you did not know it was poisoned?"

"No."

"Luke Pardy gave you the money to put the cup on the stand among the medicines?"

"He did."

"Then he is the murderer, and not you. It is your duty to see that this Pardy takes the place of Maurice Redmon in a prison cell."

"See here! You just come here to-morrow, an' hide, an' you'll see a sight." And a cunning look shot from the eyes of the simpleton.

Early the next day I was at the forest spring, with George Martin as a companion.

We had been nearly an hour secreted in the bushes near the spring when the sounds of steps and voices were heard. Two men walked down the path and stood by the lone spring. Idiot Sam was one. George Martin started as he gazed upon the face of the other.

"You said you had the cup, Sam. If you don't produce it I'll send you to join Lucy Redmon."

"No you won't!"

"Look here, you've fooled me long enough. I must have that cup before I leave this place," said Luke Pardy in a stern voice.

"Why d'you want it? It did its work, and he's goin' ter prison. What more could you want?" said Simple Sam, coolly.

"Yes, it did its work," grated the man. "I revenged myself on both of them. That cup was a good instrument. I may need it again."

"To murder some one else?"

"Satan! man, why will you talk that way?"

"You'n me have sent an innocent man to prison, Luke."

"Well, I don't care."

"But I do. I didn't know the cup was poisoned, or I wouldn't 'a' done what you told me. Do you know what I'm goin' ter do?"

"What, you idiot?"

"To tell the whole thing."

Luke Pardy laughed.

"Now what? Ain't you afeard?" cried the simpleton, in evident astonishment.

"Nobody would believe an idiot," said the villain.

"But you said yourself the cup was poisoned. And you told me to leave it where it would be used by the sick woman. Wasn't it true?"

"Yes."

"Then you are a murderer. In the name of Heaven I proclaim you such."

"Give me the cup you have kept hidden so long!" commanded the villain, advancing upon Simple Sam.

"Never!"

"Then I'll strangle you."

"Help! Help!"

As the hands of Luke Pardy closed upon the idiot two men sprang from the bushes upon the returned East Indian and hurled him to the ground, and in less time than it takes to tell it I had the handcuffs over the wrists of the self-confessed murderer.

The poisoned cup proved a not unimportant witness. It was thoroughly impregnated with a subtle poison, not arsenic, but an East Indian poison resembling it somewhat, yet one that puzzled the American doctors to analyze.

Pardy asked to look at the cup one day during his trial. This request was granted. He placed it to his lips, and a moment later sank, dying, to the floor. Thus he cheated the law. The poisoned cup was afterward destroyed to prevent further accidents.

These Books Tell You Everything!

A COMPLETE SET IS A REGULAR ENCYCLOPEDIA!

Each book consists of sixty-four pages, printed on good paper, in clear type and neatly bound in an attractive, illustrated cover. Most of the books are also profusely illustrated, and all of the subjects treated upon are explained in such a simple manner that any child can thoroughly understand them. Look over the list as classified and see if you want to know anything about the subjects mentioned.

THESE BOOKS ARE FOR SALE BY ALL NEWSDEALERS OR WILL BE SENT BY MAIL TO ANY ADDRESS FROM THIS OFFICE ON RECEIPT OF PRICE, TEN CENTS EACH, OR ANY THREE BOOKS FOR TWENTY-FIVE CENTS. POSTAGE STAMPS TAKEN THE SAME AS MONEY. Address FRANK TOUSEY, Publisher, 24 Union Square, N.Y.

MESMERISM.

No. 81. HOW TO MESMERIZE.—Containing the most approved methods of mesmerism; also how to cure all kinds of diseases by animal magnetism, or, magnetic healing. By Prof. Leo Hugo Koch, A. C. S., author of "How to Hypnotize," etc.

PALMISTRY.

No. 82. HOW TO DO PALMISTRY.—Containing the most approved methods of reading the lines on the hand, together with a full explanation of their meaning. Also explaining phrenology, and the key for telling character by the bumps on the head. By Leo Hugo Koch, A. C. S. Fully illustrated.

HYPNOTISM.

No. 83. HOW TO HYPNOTIZE.—Containing valuable and instructive information regarding the science of hypnotism. Also explaining the most approved methods which are employed by the leading hypnotists of the world. By Leo Hugo Koch, A.C.S.

SPORTING.

No. 21. HOW TO HUNT AND FISH.—The most complete hunting and fishing guide ever published. It contains full instructions about guns, hunting dogs, traps, trapping and fishing, together with descriptions of game and fish.

No. 26. HOW TO ROW, SAIL AND BUILD A BOAT.—Fully illustrated. Every boy should know how to row and sail a boat. Full instructions are given in this little book, together with instructions on swimming and riding, companion sports to boating.

No. 47. HOW TO BREAK, RIDE AND DRIVE A HORSE.—A complete treatise on the horse. Describing the most useful horses for business, the best horses for the road; also valuable recipes for diseases peculiar to the horse.

No. 48. HOW TO BUILD AND SAIL CANOES.—A handy book for boys, containing full directions for constructing canoes and the most popular manner of sailing them. Fully illustrated. By C. Stansfield Hicks.

FORTUNE TELLING.

No. 1. NAPOLEON'S ORACULUM AND DREAM BOOK.—Containing the great oracle of human destiny; also the true meaning of almost any kind of dreams, together with charms, ceremonies, and curious games of cards. A complete book.

No. 23. HOW TO EXPLAIN DREAMS.—Everybody dreams, from the little child to the aged man and woman. This little book gives the explanation to all kinds of dreams, together with lucky and unlucky days, and "Napoleon's Oraculum," the book of fate.

No. 28. HOW TO TELL FORTUNES.—Everyone is desirous of knowing what his future life will bring forth, whether happiness or misery, wealth or poverty. You can tell by a glance at this little book. Buy one and be convinced. Tell your own fortune. Tell the fortune of your friends.

No. 76. HOW TO TELL FORTUNES BY THE HAND.—Containing rules for telling fortunes by the aid of lines of the hand, or the secret of palmistry. Also the secret of telling future events by aid of moles, marks, scars, etc. Illustrated. By A. Anderson.

ATHLETIC.

No. 6. HOW TO BECOME AN ATHLETE.—Giving full instruction for the use of dumb bells, Indian clubs, parallel bars, horizontal bars and various other methods of developing a good, healthy muscle; containing over sixty illustrations. Every boy can become strong and healthy by following the instructions contained in this little book.

No. 10. HOW TO BOX.—The art of self-defense made easy. Containing over thirty illustrations of guards, blows, and the different positions of a good boxer. Every boy should obtain one of these useful and instructive books, as it will teach you how to box without an instructor.

No. 25. HOW TO BECOME A GYMNAST.—Containing full instructions for all kinds of gymnastic sports and athletic exercises. Embracing thirty-five illustrations. By Professor W. Macdonald. A handy and useful book.

No. 34. HOW TO FENCE.—Containing full instruction for fencing and the use of the broadsword; also instruction in archery. Described with twenty-one practical illustrations, giving the best positions in fencing. A complete book.

TRICKS WITH CARDS.

No. 51. HOW TO DO TRICKS WITH CARDS.—Containing explanations of the general principles of sleight-of-hand applicable to card tricks; of card tricks with ordinary cards, and not requiring sleight-of-hand; of tricks involving sleight-of-hand, or the use of specially prepared cards. By Professor Haffner. Illustrated.

No. 72. HOW TO DO SIXTY TRICKS WITH CARDS.—Embracing all of the latest and most deceptive card tricks, with illustrations. By A. Anderson.

No. 77. HOW TO DO FORTY TRICKS WITH CARDS.—Containing deceptive Card Tricks as performed by leading conjurers and magicians. Arranged for home amusement. Fully illustrated.

MAGIC.

No. 2. HOW TO DO TRICKS.—The great book of magic and card tricks, containing full instruction on all the leading card tricks of the day, also the most popular magical illusions as performed by our leading magicians; every boy should obtain a copy of this book, as it will both amuse and instruct.

No. 22. HOW TO DO SECOND SIGHT.—Heller's second sight explained by his former assistant, Fred Hunt, Jr. Explaining how the secret dialogues were carried on between the magician and the boy on the stage; also giving all the codes and signals. The only authentic explanation of second sight.

No. 43. HOW TO BECOME A MAGICIAN.—Containing the grandest assortment of magical illusions ever placed before the public. Also tricks with cards, incantations, etc.

No. 68. HOW TO DO CHEMICAL TRICKS.—Containing over one hundred highly amusing and instructive tricks with chemicals. By A. Anderson. Handsomely illustrated.

No. 69. HOW TO DO SLEIGHT OF HAND.—Containing over fifty of the latest and best tricks used by magicians. Also containing the secret of second sight. Fully illustrated. By A. Anderson.

No. 70. HOW TO MAKE MAGIC TOYS.—Containing full directions for making Magic Toys and devices of many kinds. By A. Anderson. Fully illustrated.

No. 73. HOW TO DO TRICKS WITH NUMBERS.—Showing many curious tricks with figures and the magic of numbers. By A. Anderson. Fully illustrated.

No. 75. HOW TO BECOME A CONJUROR.—Containing tricks with Dominos, Dice, Cups and Balls, Hats, etc. Embracing thirty-six illustrations. By A. Anderson.

No. 78. HOW TO DO THE BLACK ART.—Containing a complete description of the mysteries of Magic and Sleight of Hand, together with many wonderful experiments. By A. Anderson. Illustrated.

MECHANICAL.

No. 29. HOW TO BECOME AN INVENTOR.—Every boy should know how inventions originated. This book explains them all, giving examples in electricity, hydraulics, magnetism, optics, pneumatics, mechanics, etc. The most instructive book published.

No. 56. HOW TO BECOME AN ENGINEER.—Containing full instructions how to proceed in order to become a locomotive engineer; also directions for building a model locomotive; together with a full description of everything an engineer should know.

No. 57. HOW TO MAKE MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS.—Full directions how to make a Banjo, Violin, Zither, Aeolian Harp, Xylophone and other musical instruments; together with a brief description of nearly every musical instrument used in ancient or modern times. Profusely illustrated. By Algernon S. Fitzgerald, for twenty years bandmaster of the Royal Bengal Marines.

No. 59. HOW TO MAKE A MAGIC LANTERN.—Containing a description of the lantern, together with its history and invention. Also full directions for its use and for painting slides. Handsomely illustrated. By John Allen.

No. 71. HOW TO DO MECHANICAL TRICKS.—Containing complete instructions for performing over sixty Mechanical Tricks. By A. Anderson. Fully illustrated.

LETTER WRITING.

No. 11. HOW TO WRITE LOVE-LETTERS.—A most complete little book, containing full directions for writing love-letters, and when to use them, giving specimen letters for young and old.

No. 12. HOW TO WRITE LETTERS TO LADIES.—Giving complete instructions for writing letters to ladies on all subjects; also letters of introduction, notes and requests.

No. 24. HOW TO WRITE LETTERS TO GENTLEMEN.—Containing full directions for writing to gentlemen on all subjects; also giving sample letters for instruction.

No. 53. HOW TO WRITE LETTERS.—A wonderful little book, telling you how to write to your sweetheart, your father, mother, sister, brother, employer; and, in fact, everybody and anybody you wish to write to. Every young man and every young lady in the land should have this book.

No. 74. HOW TO WRITE LETTERS CORRECTLY.—Containing full instructions for writing letters on almost any subject; also rules for punctuation and composition, with specimen letters.

THE STAGE.

No. 41. **THE BOYS OF NEW YORK END MEN'S JOKE BOOK.**—Containing a great variety of the latest jokes used by the most famous end men. No amateur minstrels is complete without this wonderful little book.

No. 42. **THE BOYS OF NEW YORK STUMP SPEAKER.**—Containing a varied assortment of stump speeches, Negro, Dutch and Irish. Also end men's jokes. Just the thing for home amusement and amateur shows.

No. 45. **THE BOYS OF NEW YORK MINSTREL GUIDE AND JOKE BOOK.**—Something new and very instructive. Every boy should obtain this book, as it contains full instructions for organizing an amateur minstrel troupe.

No. 65. **MULDOON'S JOKES.**—This is one of the most original joke books ever published, and it is brimful of wit and humor. It contains a large collection of songs, jokes, conundrums, etc., of Terrence Muldoon, the great wit, humorist, and practical joker of the day. Every boy who can enjoy a good substantial joke should obtain a copy immediately.

No. 79. **HOW TO BECOME AN ACTOR.**—Containing complete instructions how to make up for various characters on the stage; together with the duties of the Stage Manager, Prompter, Scenic Artist and Property Man. By a prominent Stage Manager.

No. 80. **GUS WILLIAMS' JOKE BOOK.**—Containing the latest jokes, anecdotes and funny stories of this world-renowned and ever popular German comedian. Sixty-four pages; handsome colored cover containing a half-tone photo of the author.

HOUSEKEEPING.

No. 16. **HOW TO KEEP A WINDOW GARDEN.**—Containing full instructions for constructing a window garden either in town or country, and the most approved methods for raising beautiful flowers at home. The most complete book of the kind ever published.

No. 30. **HOW TO COOK.**—One of the most instructive books on cooking ever published. It contains recipes for cooking meats, fish, game, and oysters; also pies, puddings, cakes and all kinds of pastry, and a grand collection of recipes by one of our most popular cooks.

No. 37. **HOW TO KEEP HOUSE.**—It contains information for everybody, boys, girls, men and women; it will teach you how to make almost anything around the house, such as parlor ornaments, brackets, cements, Aeolian harps, and bird lime for catching birds.

ELECTRICAL.

No. 46. **HOW TO MAKE AND USE ELECTRICITY.**—A description of the wonderful uses of electricity and electro magnetism; together with full instructions for making Electric Toys, Batteries, etc. By George Trebel, A. M., M. D. Containing over fifty illustrations.

No. 64. **HOW TO MAKE ELECTRICAL MACHINES.**—Containing full directions for making electrical machines, induction coils, dynamos, and many novel toys to be worked by electricity. By R. A. R. Bennett. Fully illustrated.

No. 67. **HOW TO DO ELECTRICAL TRICKS.**—Containing a large collection of instructive and highly amusing electrical tricks, together with illustrations. By A. Anderson.

ENTERTAINMENT.

No. 9. **HOW TO BECOME A VENTRILOQUIST.**—By Harry Kennedy. The secret given away. Every intelligent boy reading this book of instructions, by a practical professor (delighting multitudes every night with his wonderful imitations), can master the art, and create any amount of fun for himself and friends. It is the greatest book ever published, and there's millions (of fun) in it.

No. 20. **HOW TO ENTERTAIN AN EVENING PARTY.**—A very valuable little book just published. A complete compendium of games, sports, card diversions, comic recitations, etc., suitable for parlor or drawing-room entertainment. It contains more for the money than any book published.

No. 35. **HOW TO PLAY GAMES.**—A complete and useful little book, containing the rules and regulations of billiards, bagatelle, backgammon, croquet, dominoes, etc.

No. 36. **HOW TO SOLVE CONUNDRUMS.**—Containing all the leading conundrums of the day, amusing riddles, curious catches and witty sayings.

No. 52. **HOW TO PLAY CARDS.**—A complete and handy little book, giving the rules and full directions for playing Euchre, Cribbage, Casino, Forty-Five, Rummy, Pedro Sancho, Draw Poker, Auction Pitch, All Fours, and many other popular games of cards.

No. 66. **HOW TO DO PUZZLES.**—Containing over three hundred interesting puzzles and conundrums, with key to same. A complete book. Fully illustrated. By A. Anderson.

ETIQUETTE.

No. 13. **HOW TO DO IT; OR, BOOK OF ETIQUETTE.**—It is a great life secret, and one that every young man desires to know all about. There's happiness in it.

No. 33. **HOW TO BEHAVE.**—Containing the rules and etiquette of good society and the easiest and most approved methods of appearing to good advantage at parties, balls, the theatre, church, and in the drawing-room.

DECLAMATION.

No. 27. **HOW TO RECITE AND BOOK OF RECITATIONS.**—Containing the most popular selections in use, comprising Dutch dialect, French dialect, Yankee and Irish dialect pieces, together with many standard readings.

No. 31. **HOW TO BECOME A SPEAKER.**—Containing fourteen illustrations, giving the different positions requisite to become a good speaker, reader and elocutionist. Also containing gems from all the popular authors of prose and poetry, arranged in the most simple and concise manner possible.

No. 49. **HOW TO DEBATE.**—Giving rules for conducting debates, outlines for debates, questions for discussion, and the best sources for procuring information on the questions given.

SOCIETY.

No. 3. **HOW TO FLIRT.**—The arts and wiles of flirtation are fully explained by this little book. Besides the various methods of hardkerchief, fan, glove, parasol, window and hat flirtation, it contains a full list of the language and sentiment of flowers, which is interesting to everybody, both old and young. You cannot be happy without one.

No. 4. **HOW TO DANCE.** is the title of a new and handsome little book just issued by Frank Tousey. It contains full instructions in the art of dancing, etiquette in the ball-room and at parties, how to dress, and full directions for calling off in all popular square dances.

No. 5. **HOW TO MAKE LOVE.**—A complete guide to love, courtship and marriage, giving sensible advice, rules and etiquette to be observed, with many curious and interesting things not generally known.

No. 17. **HOW TO DRESS.**—Containing full instruction in the art of dressing and appearing well at home and abroad, giving the selections of colors, material, and how to have them made up.

No. 18. **HOW TO BECOME BEAUTIFUL.**—One of the brightest and most valuable little books ever given to the world. Everybody wishes to know how to become beautiful, both male and female. The secret is simple, and almost costless. Read this book and be convinced how to become beautiful.

BIRDS AND ANIMALS.

No. 7. **HOW TO KEEP BIRDS.**—Handsomely illustrated and containing full instructions for the management and training of the canary, mockingbird, bobolink, blackbird, parrot, etc.

No. 39. **HOW TO RAISE DOGS, POULTRY, PIGEONS AND RABBITS.**—A useful and instructive book. Handsomely illustrated. By Ira Drowfaw.

No. 40. **HOW TO MAKE AND SET TRAPS.**—Including hints on how to catch moles, weasels, otter, rats, squirrels and birds. Also how to cure skins. Copiously illustrated. By J. Harrington Keene.

No. 50. **HOW TO STUFF BIRDS AND ANIMALS.**—A valuable book, giving instructions in collecting, preparing, mounting and preserving birds, animals and insects.

No. 54. **HOW TO KEEP AND MANAGE PETS.**—Giving complete information as to the manner and method of raising, keeping, taming, breeding, and managing all kinds of pets; also giving full instructions for making cages, etc. Fully explained by twenty-eight illustrations, making it the most complete book of the kind ever published.

MISCELLANEOUS.

No. 8. **HOW TO BECOME A SCIENTIST.**—A useful and instructive book, giving a complete treatise on chemistry; also experiments in acoustics, mechanics, mathematics, chemistry, and directions for making fireworks, colored fires, and gas balloons. This book cannot be equalled.

No. 14. **HOW TO MAKE CANDY.**—A complete hand-book for making all kinds of candy, ice-cream, syrups, essences, etc., etc.

No. 84. **HOW TO BECOME AN AUTHOR.**—Containing full information regarding choice of subjects, the use of words and the manner of preparing and submitting manuscript. Also containing valuable information as to the neatness, legibility and general composition of manuscript, essential to a successful author. By Prince Hiland.

No. 38. **HOW TO BECOME YOUR OWN DOCTOR.**—A wonderful book, containing useful and practical information in the treatment of ordinary diseases and ailments common to every family. Abounding in useful and effective recipes for general complaints.

No. 55. **HOW TO COLLECT STAMPS AND COINS.**—Containing valuable information regarding the collecting and arranging of stamps and coins. Handsomely illustrated.

No. 58. **HOW TO BE A DETECTIVE.**—By Old King Brady, the world-known detective. In which he lays down some valuable and sensible rules for beginners, and also relates some adventures and experiences of well-known detectives.

No. 60. **HOW TO BECOME A PHOTOGRAPHER.**—Containing useful information regarding the Camera and how to work it; also how to make Photographic Magic Lantern Slides and other Transparencies. Handsomely illustrated. By Captain W. De W. Abney.

No. 62. **HOW TO BECOME A WEST POINT MILITARY CADET.**—Containing full explanations how to gain admittance, course of Study, Examinations, Duties, Staff of Officers, Post Guard, Police Regulations, Fire Department, and all a boy should know to be a Cadet. Compiled and written by Lu Senarens, author of "How to Become a Naval Cadet."

No. 63. **HOW TO BECOME A NAVAL CADET.**—Complete instructions of how to gain admission to the Annapolis Naval Academy. Also containing the course of instruction, description of grounds and buildings, historical sketch, and everything a boy should know to become an officer in the United States Navy. Compiled and written by Lu Senarens, author of "How to Become a West Point Military Cadet."

PRICE 10 CENTS EACH, OR 3 FOR 25 CENTS.

Address FRANK TOUSEY, Publisher, 24 Union Square, New York.

Latest Issues

"WIDE AWAKE WEEKLY"

CONTAINING STORIES OF BOY FIREMEN

COLORED COVERS

32 PAGES

PRICE 5 CENTS

- | | |
|--|---|
| 114 Young Wide Awake's Sudden Fear; or The Fireman's Trick that Won the Day. | 119 Young Wide Awake Solving a Mystery; or, Hunting Down the Fire Thieves. |
| 115 Young Wide Awake and the Wreckers; or, Saving the Government Mail. | 120 Young Wide Awake's Drawn Battle; or, Breaking Even with the Neptunes. |
| 116 Young Wide Awake's Plucky Drive; or, Bridging a Chasm of Fire. | 121 Young Wide Awake in a House of Death; or, The Mystery of a Big Blaze. |
| 117 Young Wide Awake and the Bribe; or, The Test that Makes a Man. | 122 Young Wide Awake and the "Night Prowlers"; or, The Fire at the Cartridge Works. |
| 118 Young Wide Awake's Artful Dodge; or, Placing Enemies on the Defense. | 123 Young Wide Awake's Wild Ride; or, Fighting Fire in Lincoln. |

"THE LIBERTY BOYS OF '76"

CONTAINING REVOLUTIONARY STORIES

COLORED COVERS

32 PAGES

PRICE 5 CENTS

- | | |
|---|---|
| 390 The Liberty Boys at the Death Line; or, Saving the Prisoners of Logtown. | 395 The Liberty Boys and the Blind Boy; or, The Strangest Spy of All. |
| 391 The Liberty Boys in Prison; or, The Escape from the Old Sugar House. | 396 The Liberty Boys' Rear-Guard; or, Covering Greene's Retreat. |
| 392 The Liberty Boys Flanking the Enemy; or, Putnam's Clever Ruse. | 397 The Liberty Boys at "Ten Cabin"; or, The Most Dangerous Place in Georgia. |
| 393 The Liberty Boys and the Night Watch; or, When the British Held New York. | 398 The Liberty Boys and the Masked Duelist; or, Running Down the Night Riders. |
| 394 The Liberty Boys on King's Mountain; or, A Hot Time for the British. | 399 The Liberty Boys' Underground Battle; or, Trapped in a Mammoth Cave. |

"SECRET SERVICE"

OLD AND YOUNG KING BRADY, DETECTIVES

COLORED COVERS

32 PAGES

PRICE 5 CENTS

- | | |
|---|---|
| 491 The Bradys and the Queen of Pell Street; or, The Hidden Hut in Chinatown. | 496 The Bradys Chasing a Convict; or, Betrayed by a Photograph. |
| 492 The Bradys' Gold Vault Clew; or, Who Killed Treasurer Black? | 497 The Bradys and the Forged Check; or, The Shadow on the Shades. |
| 493 The Bradys and the Factory Fiends; or, The Clew Found in the Dark. | 498 The Bradys After the Tattooed Man; or, Running Down a Crimson Clew. |
| 494 The Bradys on a Death Ship; or, The Secret of the "Seven Sisters." | 499 The Bradys Under Suspicion; or, Detective Work for a Poor Girl. |
| 495 The Bradys and Little Ah Chin; or, The Secret Dens of Chinatown. | 500 The Bradys and the Chinese Idol; or, The Clew Found in Pell Street. |

For sale by all newsdealers, or will be sent to any address on receipt of price, 5 cents per copy, in money or postage stamps, by
FRANK TOUSEY, Publisher, **24 Union Square, N. Y.**

IF YOU WANT ANY BACK NUMBERS

of our Weeklies and cannot procure them from newsdealers, they can be obtained from this office direct. Cut out and fill in the following Order Blank and send it to us with the price of the weeklies you want and we will send them to you by return mail. POSTAGE STAMPS TAKEN THE SAME AS MONEY.

FRANK TOUSEY, Publisher, 24 Union Square, New York.

190

DEAR SIR—Enclosed find.....cents for which please send me:

.....copies of WORK AND WIN, Nos.....
..... " " WIDE AWAKE WEEKLY, Nos.....
..... " " WILD WEST WEEKLY, Nos.....
..... " " THE LIBERTY BOYS OF '76, Nos.....
..... " " PLUCK AND LUCK, Nos.....
..... " " SECRET SERVICE, Nos.....
..... " " FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY, Nos.....
..... " " Ten-Cent Hand Books, Nos.....

Name.....Street and No.....Town.....State.....

Fame and Fortune Weekly

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY

By A SELF-MADE MAN

COLORED COVERS

PRICE 5 Cts.

ISSUED EVERY FRIDAY

32 PAGES

This Weekly contains interesting stories of smart boys, who win fame and fortune by their ability to take advantage of passing opportunities. Some of these stories are founded on true incidents in the lives of our most successful self-made men, and show how a boy of pluck, perseverance and brains can become famous and wealthy.

ALREADY PUBLISHED.

- 69 An Eye to Business; or, The Boy Who Was Not Asleep.
70 Tipped by the Ticker; or, An Ambitious Boy in Wall Street.
71 On to Success; or, The Boy Who Got Ahead.
72 A Bid for a Fortune; or, A Country Boy in Wall Street.
73 Bound to Rise; or, Fighting His Way to Success.
74 Out for the Dollars; or, A Smart Boy in Wall Street.
75 For Fame and Fortune; or, The Boy Who Won Both.
76 A Wall Street Winner; or, Making a Mint of Money.
77 The Road to Wealth; or, The Boy Who Found It Out.
78 On the Wing; or, The Young Mercury of Wall Street.
79 A Chase for a Fortune; or, The Boy Who Hustled.
80 Juggling With the Market; or, The Boy Who Made It Pay.
81 Cast Adrift; or, The Luck of a Homeless Boy.
82 Playing the Market; or, A Keen Boy in Wall Street.
83 A Pot of Money; or, The Legacy of a Lucky Boy.
84 From Rags to Riches; or, A Lucky Wall Street Messenger.
85 On His Merits; or, The Smartest Boy Alive.
86 Trapping the Brokers; or, A Game Wall Street Boy.
87 A Million in Gold; or, The Treasure of Santa Cruz.
88 Bound to Make Money; or, From the West to Wall Street.
89 The Boy Magnate; or, Making Baseball Pay.
90 Making Money; or, A Wall Street Messenger's Luck.
91 A Harvest of Gold; or, The Buried Treasure of Coral Island.
92 On the Curb; or, Beating the Wall Street Brokers.
93 A Freak of Fortune; or, The Boy Who Struck Luck.
94 The Prince of Wall Street; or, A Big Deal for Big Money.
95 Starting His Own Business; or, The Boy Who Caught On.
96 A Corner in Stock; or, The Wall Street Boy Who Won.
97 First in the Field; or, Doing Business for Himself.
98 A Broker at Eighteen; or, Roy Gilbert's Wall Street Career.
99 Only a Dollar; or, From Errand Boy to Owner.
100 Price & Co., Boy Brokers; or, The Young Traders of Wall Street.
101 A Winning Risk; or, The Boy Who Made Good.
102 From a Dime to a Million; or, A Wide-Awake Wall Street Boy.
103 The Path to Good Luck; or, The Boy Miner of Death Valley.
104 Mart Morton's Money; or, A Corner in Wall Street Stocks.
105 Famous at Fourteen; or, The Boy Who Made a Great Name.
106 Tips to Fortune; or, A Lucky Wall Street Deal.
107 Striking His Gait; or, The Perils of a Boy Engineer.
108 From Messenger to Millionaire; or, A Boy's Luck in Wall Street.
109 The Boy Gold Hunters; or, After a Pirate's Treasure.
110 Tricking the Traders; or, A Wall Street Boy's Game of Chance.
111 Jack Merry's Grit; or, Making a Man of Himself.
112 A Golden Shower; or, The Boy Banker of Wall Street.
113 Making a Record; or, The Luck of a Working Boy.
114 A Fight for Money; or, From School to Wall Street.
115 Stranded Out West; or, The Boy Who Found a Silver Mine.
116 Ben Bassford's Luck; or, Working on Wall Street Tips.
117 A Young Gold King; or, The Treasure of the Secret Caves.
118 Bound to Get Rich; or, How a Wall Street Boy Made Money.
119 Friendless Frank; or, The Boy Who Became Famous.
120 A \$30,000 Tip; or, The Young Weazel of Wall Street.
121 Plucky Bob; or, The Boy Who Won Success.
122 From Newsboy to Banker; or, Rob Lake's Rise in Wall Street.
123 A Golden Stake; or, The Treasure of the Indies.
124 A Grip on the Market; or, A Hot Time in Wall Street.
125 Watching His Chance; or, From Ferry Boy to Captain.
126 A Game for Gold; or, The Young King of Wall Street.
127 A Wizard for Luck; or, Getting Ahead in the World.
128 A Fortune at Stake; or, A Wall Street Messenger's Deal.
129 His Last Nickel; or, What It Did for Jack Rand.
130 Nat Noble, the Little Broker; or, The Boy Who Started a Wall Street Panic.
131 A Struggle for Fame; or, The Gamest Boy in the World.
132 The Young Money Magnate; or, The Wall Street Boy Who Broke the Market.
133 A Lucky Contract; or, The Boy Who Made a Raft of Money.
134 A Big Risk; or, The Game that Won.
135 On Pirate's Isle; or, The Treasure of the Seven Craters.
136 A Wall Street Mystery; or, The Boy Who Beat the Syndicate.
137 Dick Hadley's Mine; or, The Boy Gold Diggers of Mexico.
138 A Boy Stockbroker; or, From Errand Boy to Millionaire. (A Wall Street Story.)
139 Facing the World; or, A Poor Boy's Fight for Fortune.
140 A Tip Worth a Million; or, How a Boy Worked It in Wall Street.
141 Billy the Cabin Boy; or, The Treasure of Skeleton Island.
142 Just His Luck; or, Climbing the Ladder of Fame and Fortune.
143 Out with His Own Circus; or, The Success of a Young Barnum.
144 Playing for Money; or, The Boy Trader of Wall Street.
145 The Boy Copper Miner; or, Ted Brown's Rise to Riches.
146 Tips off the Tape; or, The Boy Who Startled Wall Street.
147 Striking it Rich; or, From Office Boy to Merchant Prince.
148 Lucky in Wall Street; or, The Boy Who Trimmed the Brokers.
149 In a Class by Himself; or, The Plucky Boy Who Got to the Top.
150 Bulling the Market; or, The Errand Boy Who Worked a Corner. (A Wall Street Story.)
151 After the Big Blue Stone; or, The Treasure of the Jungle.
152 Little Jay Perkins, the Broker; or, Shearing the Wall Street "Lambs."

For sale by all newsdealers, or will be sent to any address on receipt of price, 5 cents per copy, in money or postage stamps, by

FRANK TOUSEY, Publisher,

24 Union Square, New York.

IF YOU WANT ANY BACK NUMBERS

of our Weeklies and cannot procure them from newsdealers, they can be obtained from this office direct. Cut out and fill in the following Order Blank and send it to us with the price of the weeklies you want and we will send them to you by return mail. POSTAGE STAMPS TAKEN THE SAME AS MONEY.

FRANK TOUSEY, Publisher, 24 Union Square, New York.

190

DEAR SIR—Enclosed find.....cents for which please send me:

....copies of WORK AND WIN, Nos.....
.... " " WIDE AWAKE WEEKLY, Nos.....
.... " " WILD WEST WEEKLY, Nos.....
.... " " THE LIBERTY BOYS OF '76, Nos.....
.... " " PLUCK AND LUCK, Nos.....
.... " " SECRET SERVICE, Nos.....
.... " " FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY, Nos.....
.... " " Ten-Cent Hand Books, Nos.....

Name.....Street and No.....Town.....State.....